

# *Sunstone*

*Volume 4*



*Stjepan Sejic*







Top Cow Productions Presents...

# Sunstone™

*Created by Stjepan Sejic*



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Top Cow Productions Presents...



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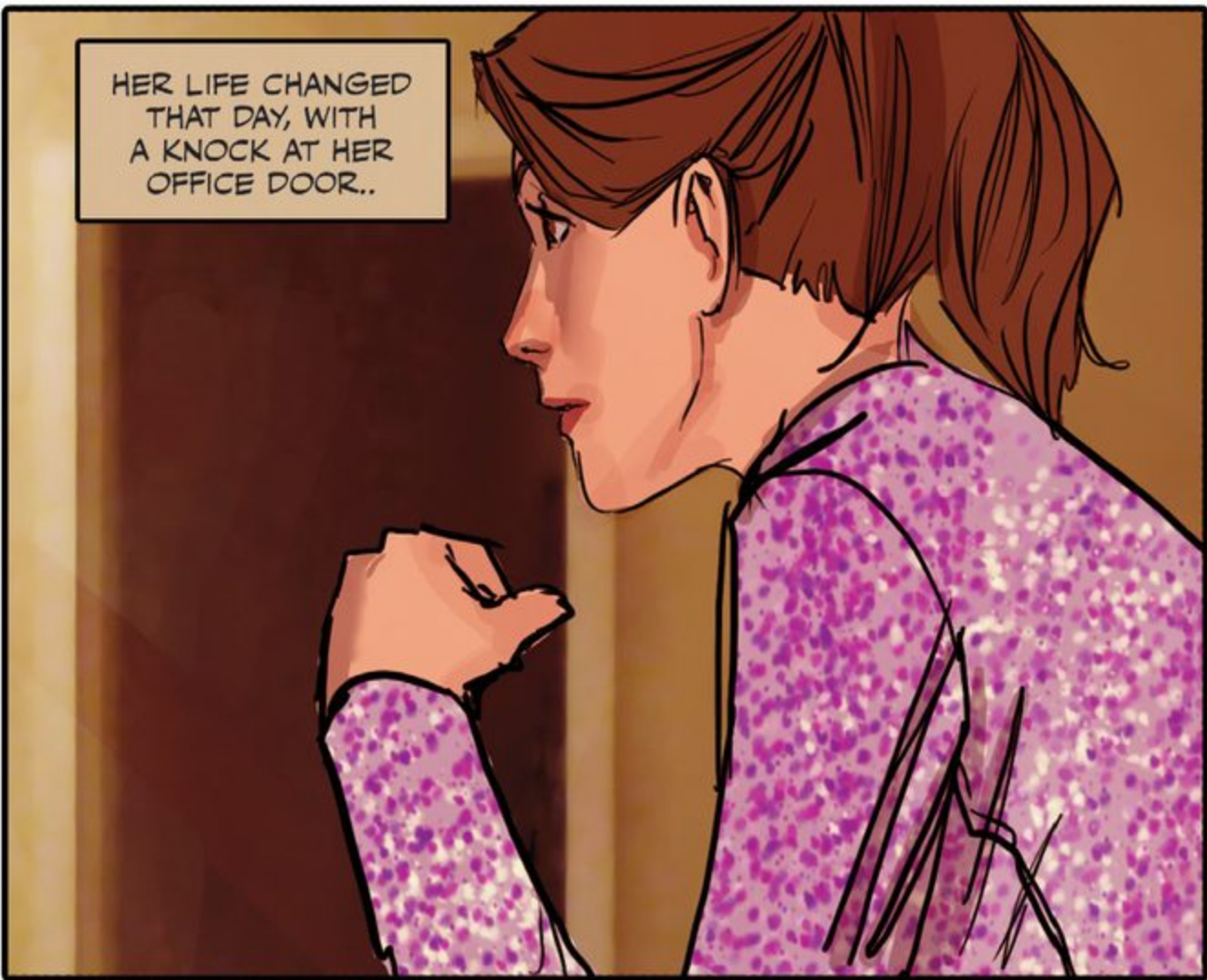
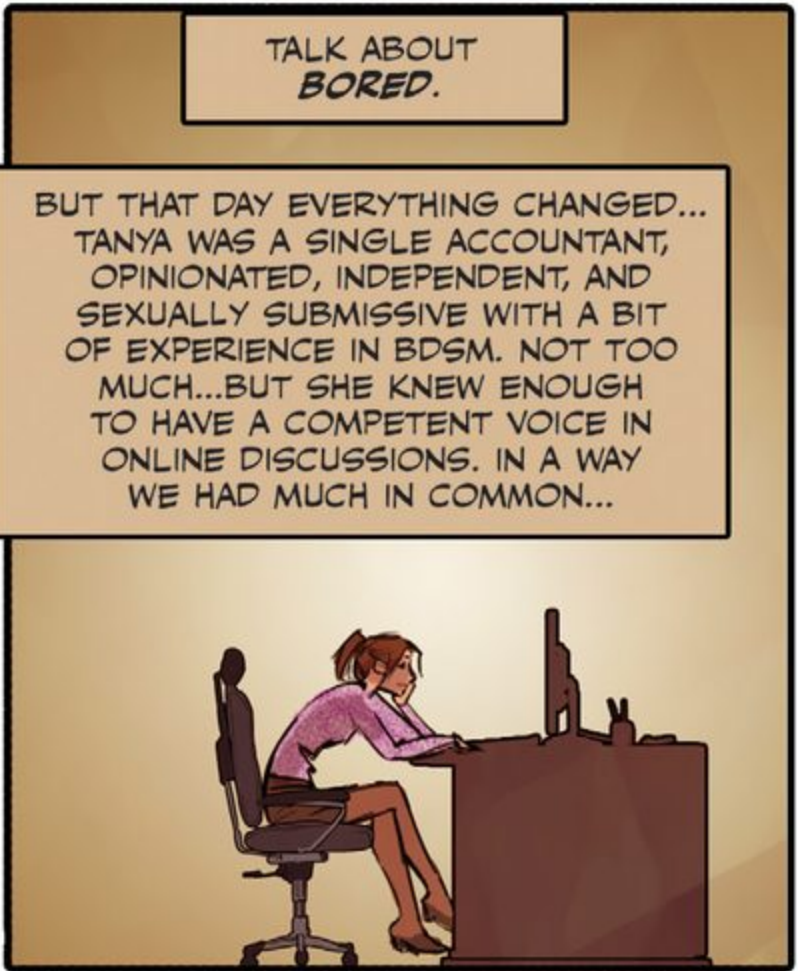
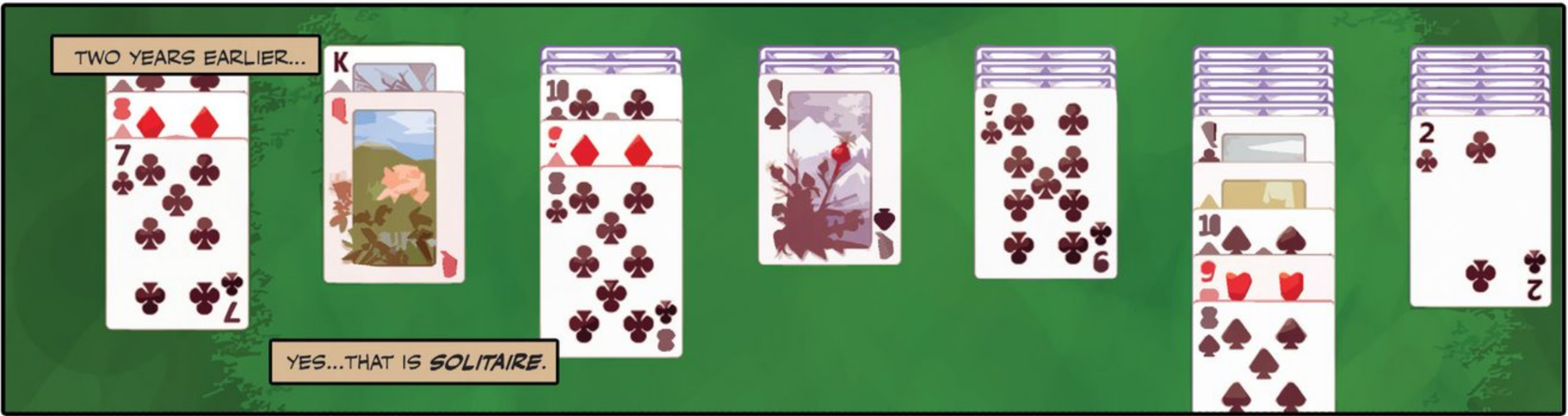
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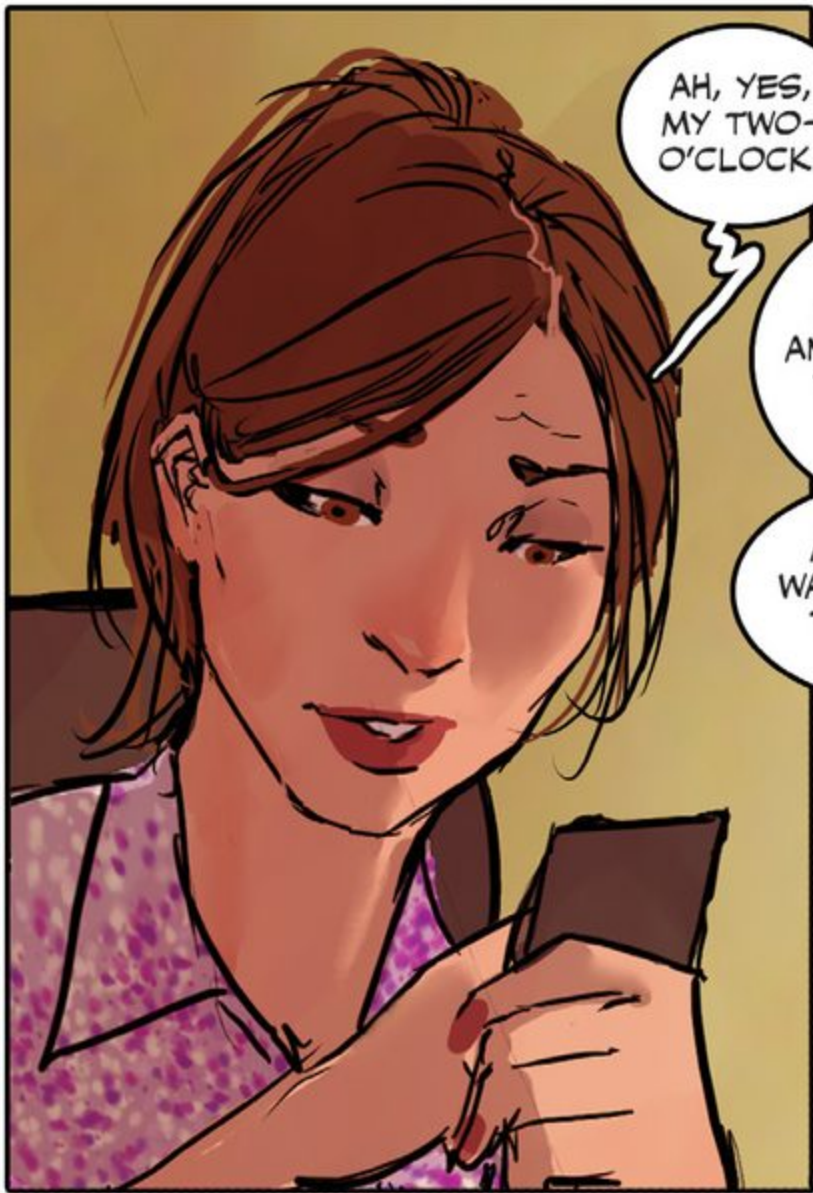












AH, YES, MY TWO-O'CLOCK.



YES. I CALLED ABOUT MY CLUB. I NEED AN ACCOUNTANT AND YOU CAME HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, MISS WILKINS.

AND BY THE WAY, FEEL FREE TO CALL ME HARPER.



IF IT'S ALL THE SAME, I PREFER MR. THOMAS.

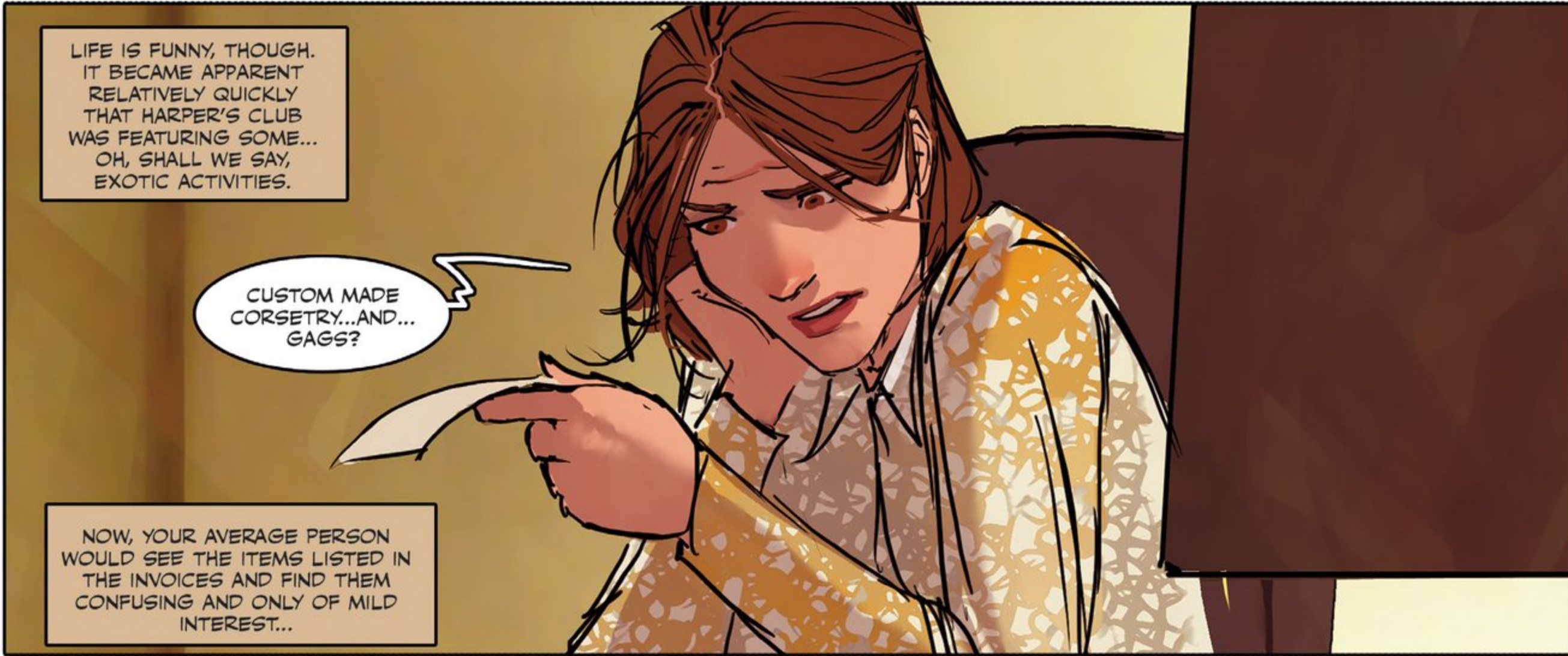
NOW, I PRESUME YOU GATHERED THE PAPERWORK I ASKED FOR?



YEAH, YOU WILL ALSO FIND THIS MONTH'S FREELANCER INVOICES ATTACHED ALONGSIDE WITH ALL THE EMPLOYEE INFORMATION.

AND SO TANYA BECAME HARPER'S ACCOUNTANT...

HMM...THAT DOESN'T REALLY SOUND ALL THAT ROMANTIC OR GLAMOROUS...BUT LIFE RARELY IS...



LIFE IS FUNNY, THOUGH. IT BECAME APPARENT RELATIVELY QUICKLY THAT HARPER'S CLUB WAS FEATURING SOME... OH, SHALL WE SAY, EXOTIC ACTIVITIES.

CUSTOM MADE CORSETRY...AND... GAGS?

NOW, YOUR AVERAGE PERSON WOULD SEE THE ITEMS LISTED IN THE INVOICES AND FIND THEM CONFUSING AND ONLY OF MILD INTEREST...



BUT TANYA KNEW BETTER.

FOUR LEATHER STRAIT-JACKETS AND TWO LATEX ONES...



TWO ARMBINDERS, THREE PAIRS OF CUSTOM BALLET BOOTS, AND TWO PAIRS OF... PONY BOOTS???



A SUSPENSION HARNESS AND...A GYROSCOPIC ROTATING METAL BONDAGE RIG??? THE FUCK? EVEN I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT IS!





ARE YOU  
A PIMP?

A-HEM...SO TANYA  
HAS ALWAYS HAD A  
LOW TOLERANCE FOR  
BULLSHIT. THIS  
SOMETIMES MADE  
HER LOOK...HARSH.



A...PIMP?  
IS THIS  
A RACE THING?

DO I NEED TO  
MENTION THAT  
TANYA AND HARPER  
STARTED THINGS  
OFF ON THE WRONG  
FOOT?



NO, THIS IS AN  
"I'M NOT AN IDIOT AND I KNOW  
WELL WHAT THE ITEMS IN YOUR  
INVOICES ARE USED FOR"  
THING.



NOW IF IT  
WAS JUST THE FETISHWEAR,  
I WOULD JUST PRESUME YOU  
ARE RUNNING A STRIP  
CLUB.



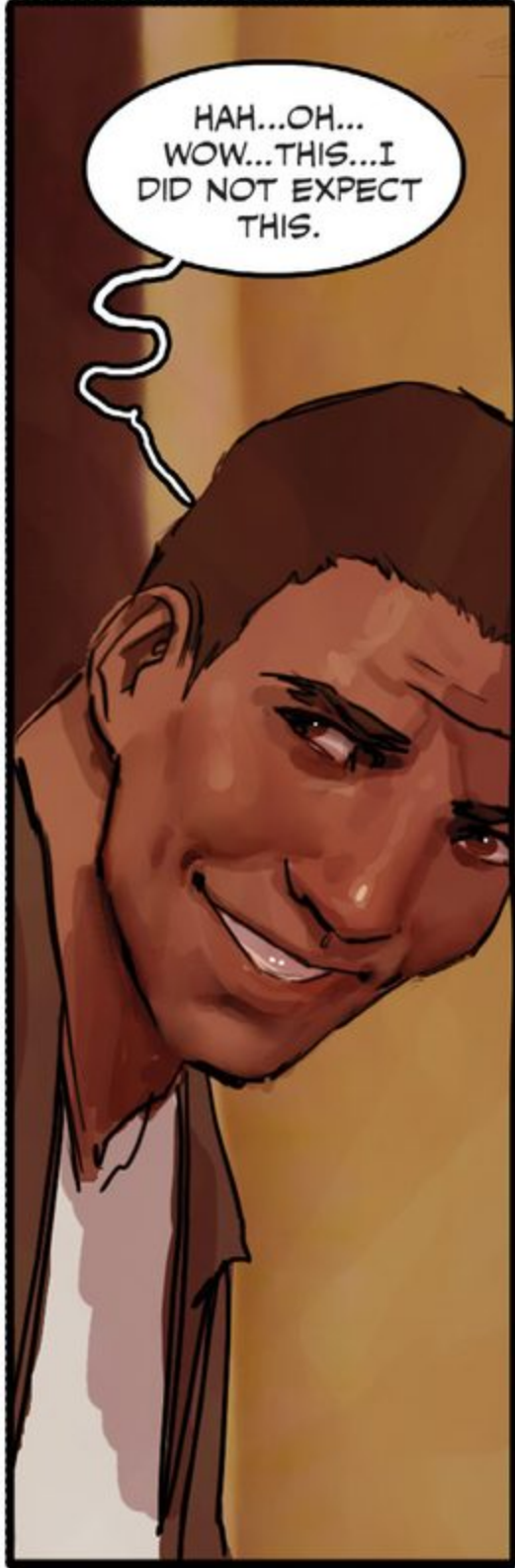
BUT I KNOW  
WHAT THE REST OF  
THE STUFF IS USED FOR,  
SO CUT THE BULLSHIT, MR.  
THOMAS. NO ACCOUNTING  
WILL MAKE PROSTITUTION  
LEGAL, AT LEAST NOT  
FROM MY  
END.



SNORT!



BWAHAHA  
HAHAHAHAHA!  
CARE TO  
LET ME IN ON  
THE JOKE, MR.  
THOMAS?



HAH...OH...  
WOW...THIS...I  
DID NOT EXPECT  
THIS.





SO...WHAT  
IS THE DEAL  
HERE?



OH, MISS WILKINS,  
YOU'VE REALLY GOT THIS ALL  
WRONG.



THEN  
*ENLIGHTEN*  
ME.

GLADLY...THOUGH  
IT WOULD BE EASIER  
IF YOU JUST CAME  
AND SAW THE CLUB  
FOR YOURSELF.



PLEASE...  
I PROMISE, IT IS NOTHING  
LIKE WHAT YOU IMAGINE. IN FACT  
I THINK YOU MIGHT FIND IT TO  
BE RIGHT UP YOUR ALLEY.



LATER THAT  
NIGHT...

SO...

IT'S  
A BDSM  
CLUB.

IN A WAY,  
YES.

AND...IT SEEMS  
TO BE QUITE A  
MODERATE ONE.

GUESS THAT'S  
WHY THERE WAS  
NOTHING ABOUT  
IT ONLINE...

WE JUST  
OPENED A MONTH  
AGO.

HEH...WELL...  
THAT AND THERE ARE A  
LOT OF RESULTS  
IF YOU SEARCH FOR  
"CRIMSON."





WE TRY TO KEEP THINGS APPROACHABLE HERE. THERE IS A BIT OF A SCHEDULE. THERE ARE REGULAR DAYS, WHEN WE HAVE PEOPLE WHO ARE NEW TO THE SCENE COMING TO MEET UP. WE GET GUEST SPEAKERS, SHIBARI ARTISTS, AND OFTEN ORGANIZE LESSONS ABOUT BDSM.

THEN THERE ARE FETISHWEAR DAYS, PERFORMANCES WITH LIMITS...WE TRY TO KEEP THINGS FROM GETTING OVERLY EXPLICIT.

AND THEN THERE ARE PARTY NIGHTS... THOSE TEND TO GET... INTERESTING.

HEH, I BET.

AND FOR MANY YEARS I WAS HIDING MY... WEIRDNESS.

HEH! DON'T WORRY JAMES, WE'RE ALL WEIRD HERE.



SO...64,000 DOLLAR QUESTION... HOW DID YOU KNOW... ABOUT ME?

ONLINE COMMUNITIES... THEY CAN SHARE MORE THAN PORN.



I NEEDED AN ACCOUNTANT AND...HONESTLY... I WANTED TO AVOID HAVING TO EXPLAIN EVERY DAMN INVOICED ITEM...

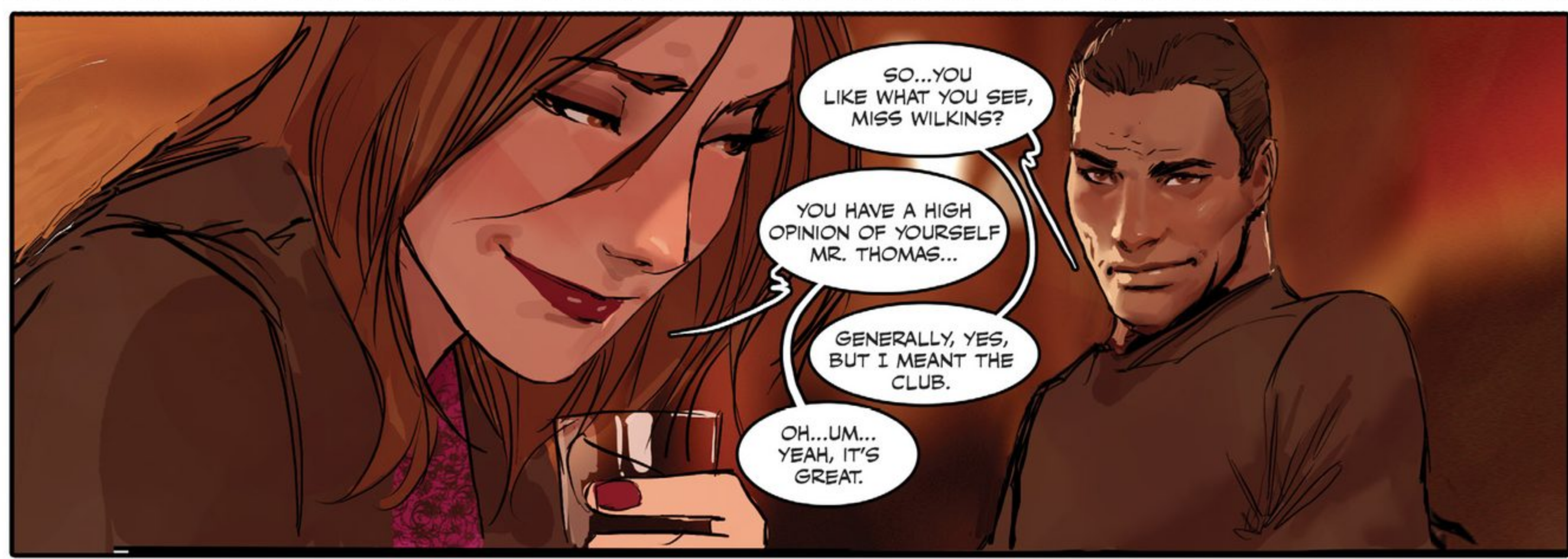


YEAH...I CAN SEE HOW THAT CONVERSATION MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN WEIRD.

I WOULD HAVE BEEN CALLED FAR WORSE NAMES THAN PIMP.

SORRY 'BOUT THAT...

S'OKAY.



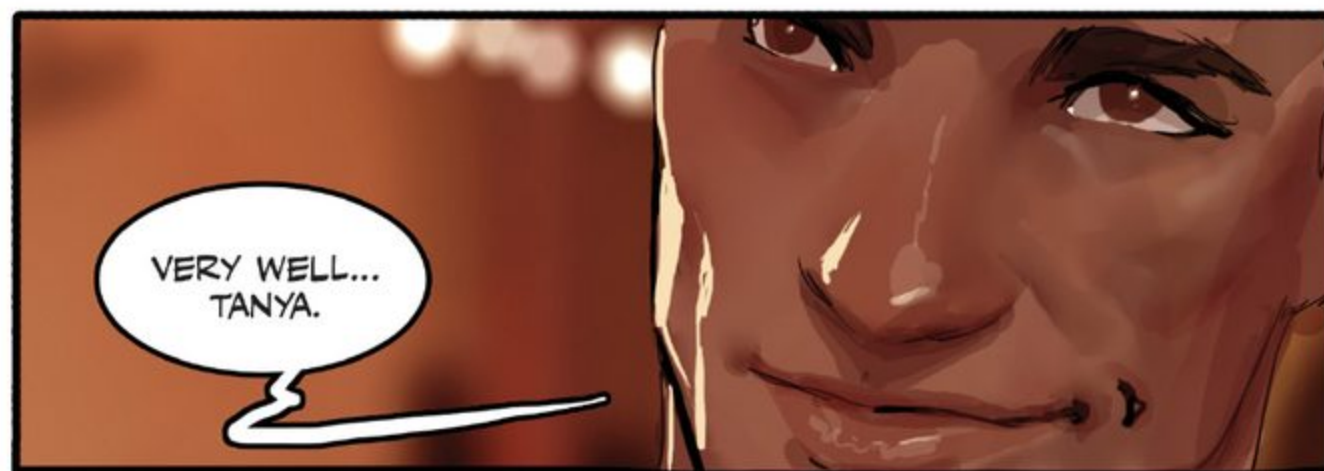
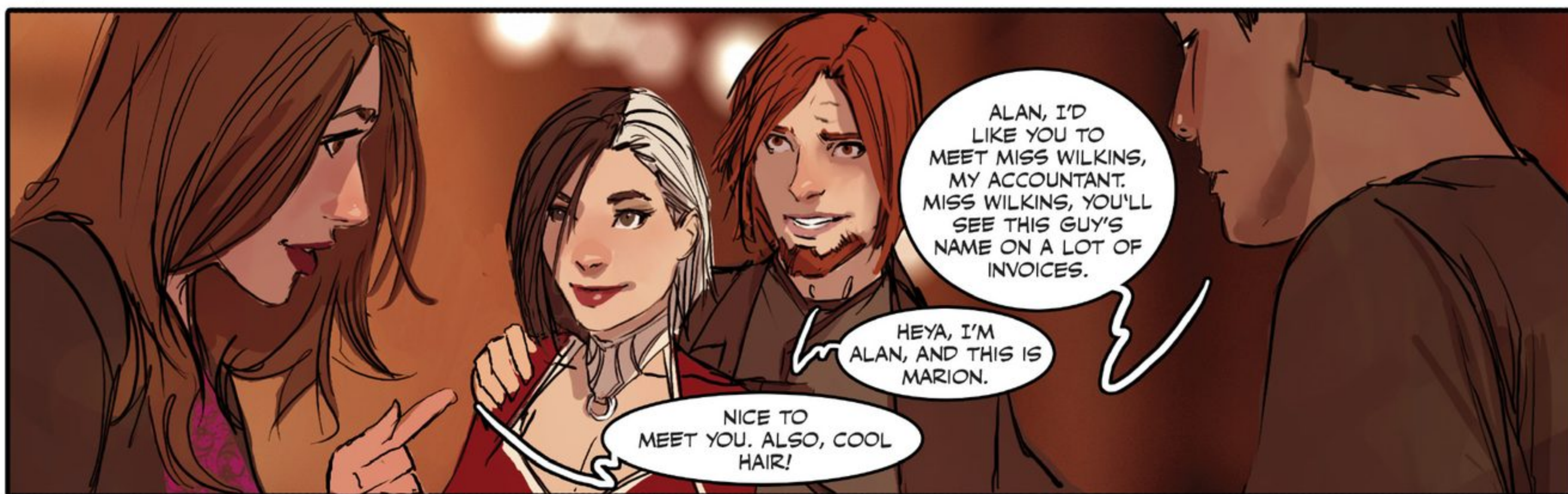
SO...YOU LIKE WHAT YOU SEE, MISS WILKINS?

YOU HAVE A HIGH OPINION OF YOURSELF MR. THOMAS...

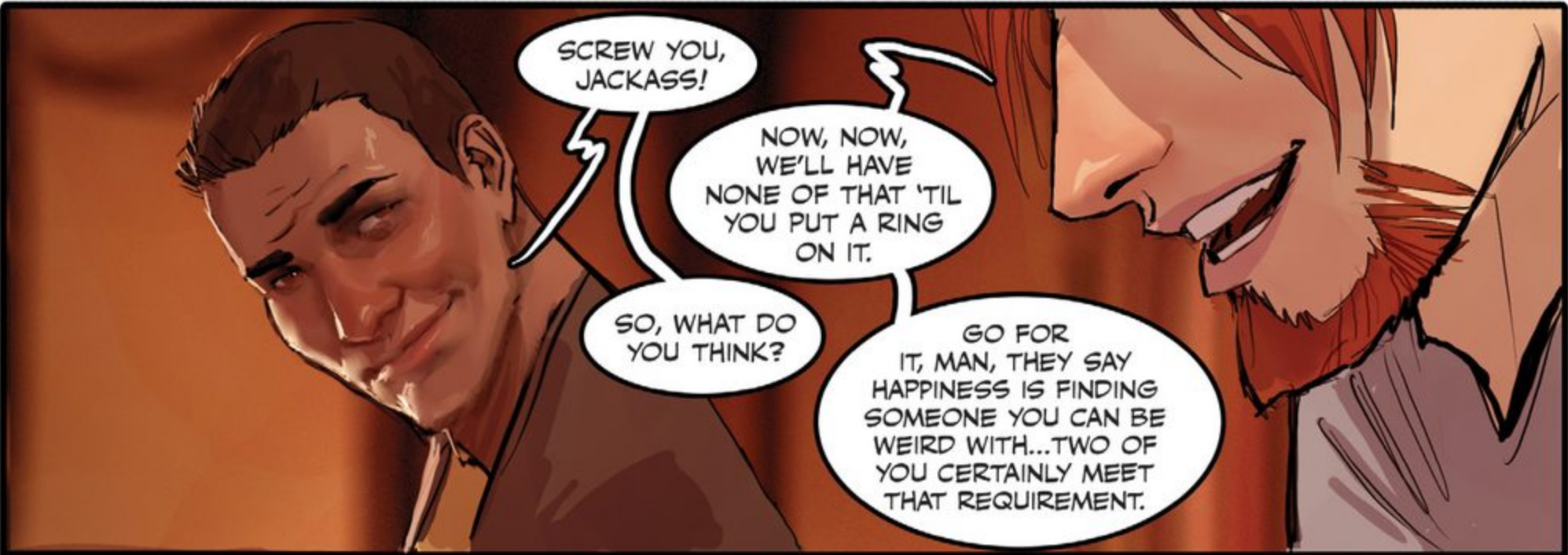
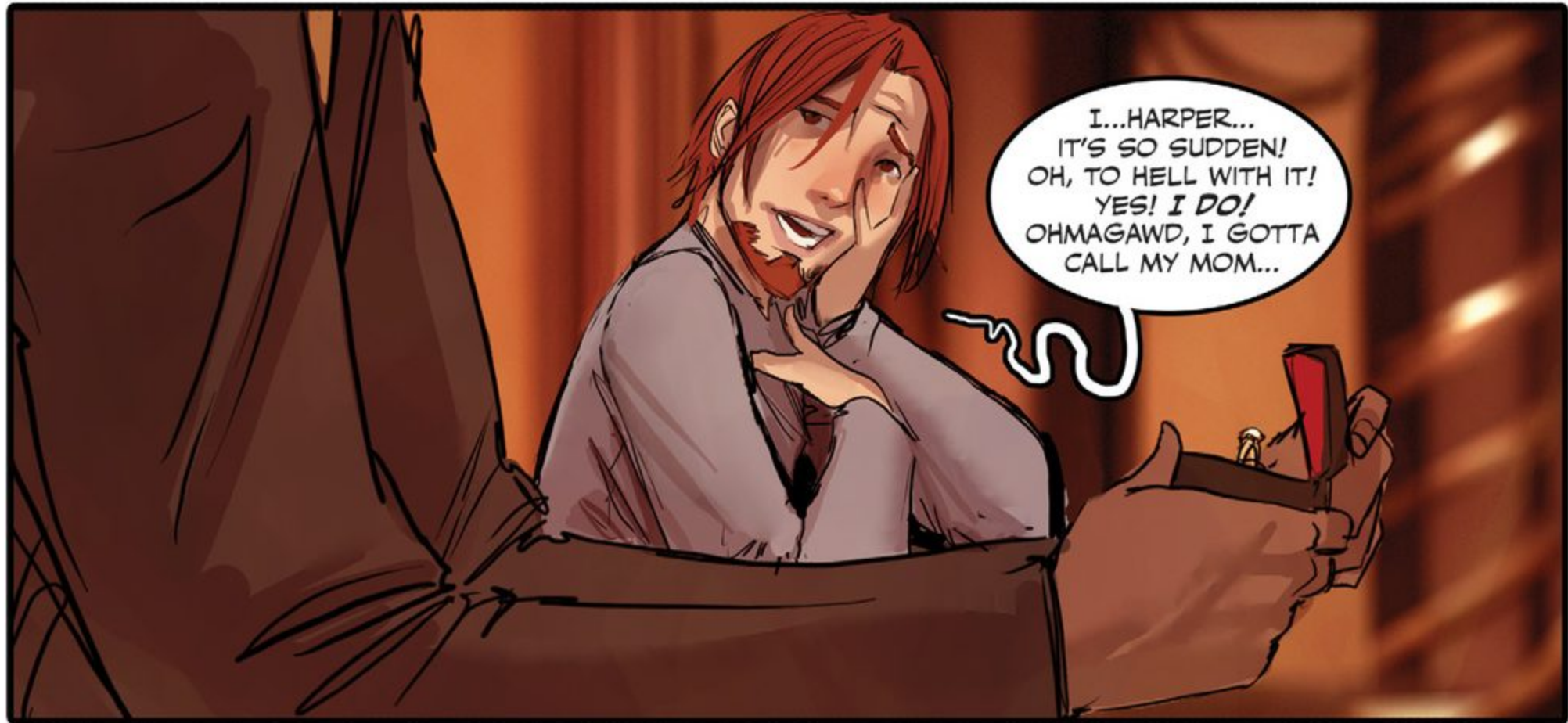
GENERALLY, YES, BUT I MEANT THE CLUB.

OH...UM... YEAH, IT'S GREAT.

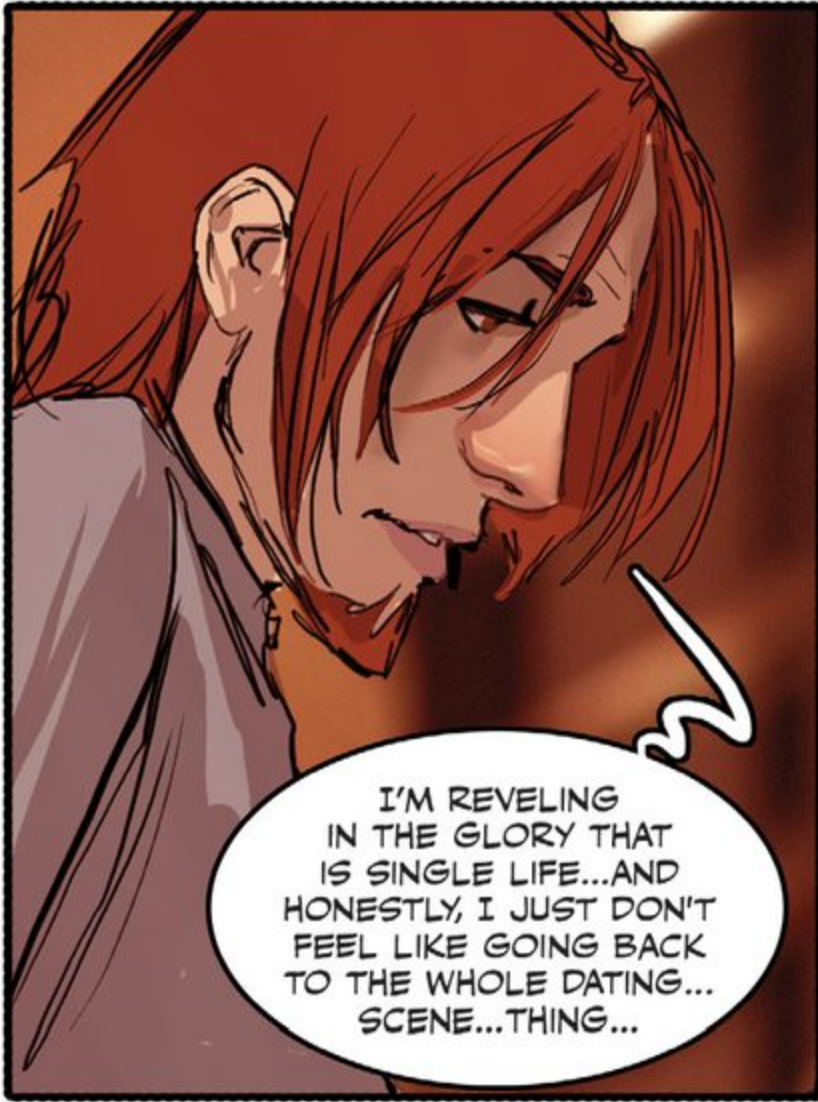














ONE SMALL  
STEP FOR  
ME...

ONE GIANT LEAP FOR...  
UM...ALLY AND ME?

OKAY, I WON'T LIE...  
IT WAS A LITTLE WEIRD.

I HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE...

CROSSED THIS THRESHOLD  
QUITE A FEW TIMES.

BUT THAT DAY, IT WAS  
DIFFERENT...

HEH...  
I AM...  
HOME!

ON YOUR  
RIGHT!

WHAT'S  
YOUR PROBLEM,  
JIMMY? DAMN!





OY, LISA... THIS CAT IS DETERMINED TO TRIP ME, A LITTLE HELP OVER HERE?

YOUR HEAVY-ASS BOOKS ARE MY PROBLEM...BUY A TABLET ALREADY!

I HAPPEN TO LIKE THE SMELL OF BOOKS!

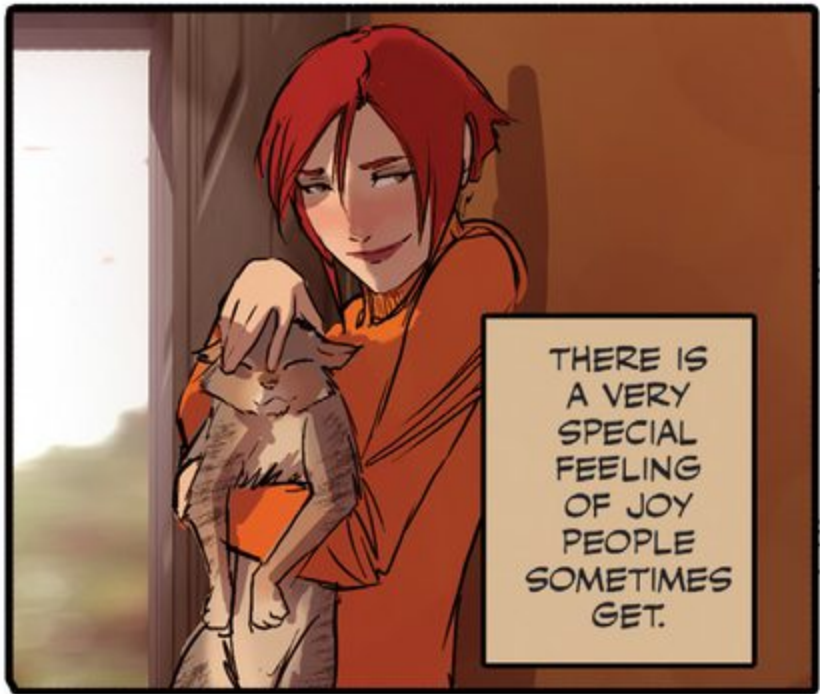
SIGH... WEIRDO!



LISA! CAT!



BONKERS, C'MERE!



THERE IS A VERY SPECIAL FEELING OF JOY PEOPLE SOMETIMES GET.



THE FEELING WHEN SOMETHING YOU MISSED IN LIFE APPEARS... A VOID IS FILLED IN YOUR HEART. YOU FEEL COMPLETE. FOR MANY IT HAPPENS IF THEY FIND THEIR SOULMATE, OR UPON FULFILLMENT OF A LIFE-LONG DREAM...

IT IS A FEELING OF JOY THAT IN A WEIRD WAY SEPARATES YOU FROM THE WORLD AROUND YOU.

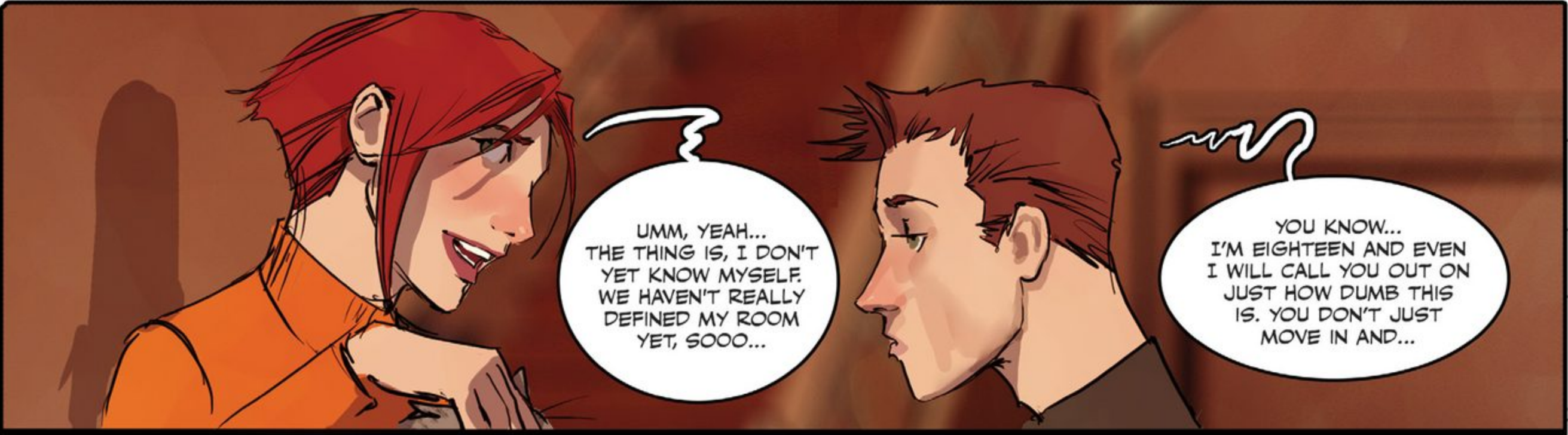
YOU ARE, FOR THAT SHORT TIME...UNTOUCHABLE.

IT IS A PERSISTENT SHIVER THAT MAKES YOU WANT TO... WELL...UM...*SQUEE*, I GUESS.



AND IT TENDS TO ANNOY SOME PEOPLE AROUND YOU.

COULD YOU STOP PLAYING WITH THE CAT LONG ENOUGH TO TELL ME WHERE TO DROP OFF THESE BOXES???



UMM, YEAH... THE THING IS, I DON'T YET KNOW MYSELF. WE HAVEN'T REALLY DEFINED MY ROOM YET, SOOO...

YOU KNOW... I'M EIGHTEEN AND EVEN I WILL CALL YOU OUT ON JUST HOW DUMB THIS IS. YOU DON'T JUST MOVE IN AND...





HEY, LISA,  
SORRY I'M A BIT  
LATE! TRAFFIC WAS  
A BITCH TODAY.



NO WORRIES,  
WE ARE JUST ABOUT  
DONE HERE.

AHEM!



OH, YES, THIS LI'L  
FELLA IS MY KID BROTHER,  
JAMES.

YEAH...IF THESE BOXES  
DON'T FIND THEIR DESTINATION  
SOON, I SWEAR, I'M DROPPING  
THEM ON YOUR HEAD.

AWW, JIMMY,  
YOU CAN'T REACH  
MY HEAD.

I'LL GET  
A STOOL.



ANYWAYS,  
JIMMY, THIS IS  
MY **BFF**,  
ALLISON.

UMM...  
YEAH...  
HI...

HEYA,  
JIMMY!

AHEM...YEAH...  
JIMMY KINDA LIKED  
ALLY FOR A BIT...

SO...YKNOW, IMAGINE  
SLOW MOTION, SWOONING  
MUSIC, ALL THAT CHEESY  
CRAP.





OH, HEY THERE!  
ALLISON, RIGHT?

ALLY  
WILL DO.

LOVE THE  
HOUSE! QUITE  
IMPRESSIVE FOR A  
PROGRAMMER.



WELL...YOU  
KNOW, I'VE GOT A BIT  
OF BUSINESS SENSE.

SENSE AND  
THE LOOKS TO  
MATCH! SPEAKING  
OF WHICH...



I LIKE YOUR  
BUSINESS LOOK...SORTA GOT  
THIS *CORPORATE DOMINATRIX*  
VIBE...IN THE BEST POSSIBLE  
WAY, OF COURSE.

*DOMINATRIX*  
YOU SAY...THAT IS  
ONE OF THOSE LADIES  
THAT *WHIP* PEOPLE,  
RIGHT?



UMM...YEAH...I  
GUESS THEY ARE...I MEAN,  
I'M NOT INTO THAT MYSELF...AND  
I'M NOT SUGGESTING THAT YOU  
ARE...IT'S JUST THAT...WELL,  
YOU HAVE THIS...

DOMINATRIX  
VIBE...

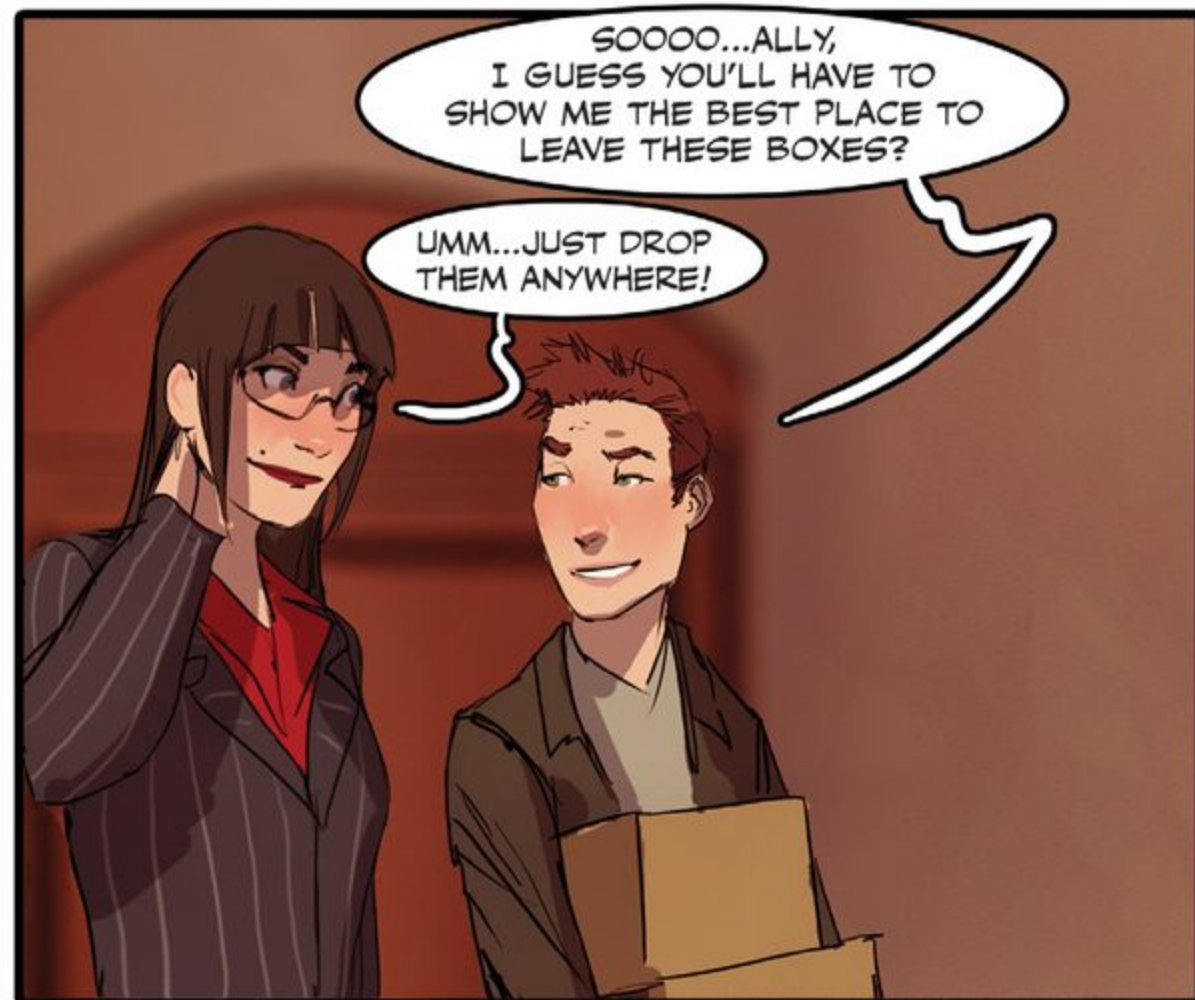
YEAH...HEH.  
SO, UM...LISTEN,  
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU  
ARE FREE THIS --



YEAH, NO! SORRY,  
ALLY, MIKE AND I HAVE SOMETHING  
TO DISCUSS.

BUT...

NOW!



SOOOO...ALLY,  
I GUESS YOU'LL HAVE TO  
SHOW ME THE BEST PLACE TO  
LEAVE THESE BOXES?

UMM...JUST DROP  
THEM ANYWHERE!



MY YOUNGER BROTHER  
LIKING ALLY, I  
WAS FINE WITH...



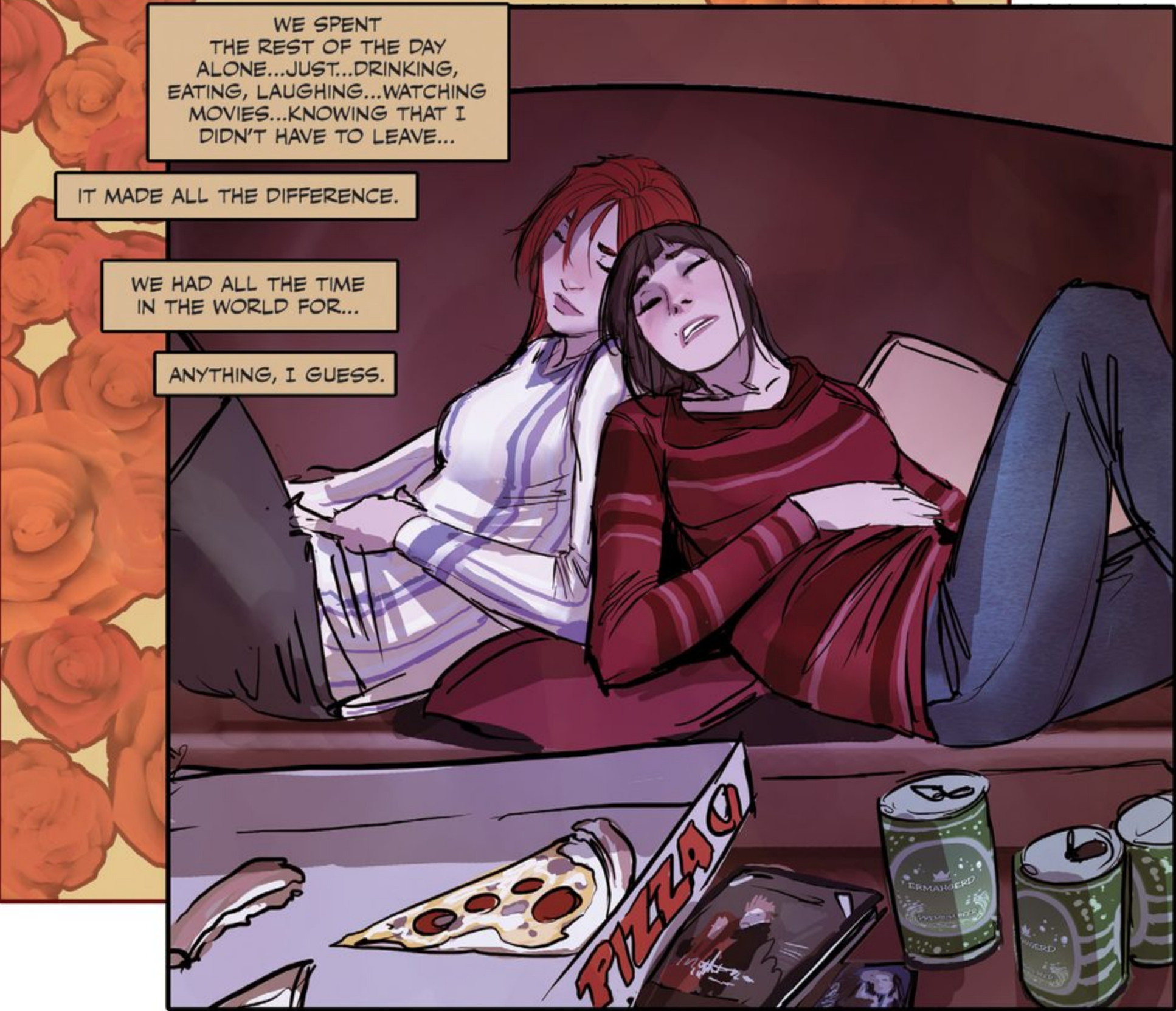
BUT MIKE...

WHAT?

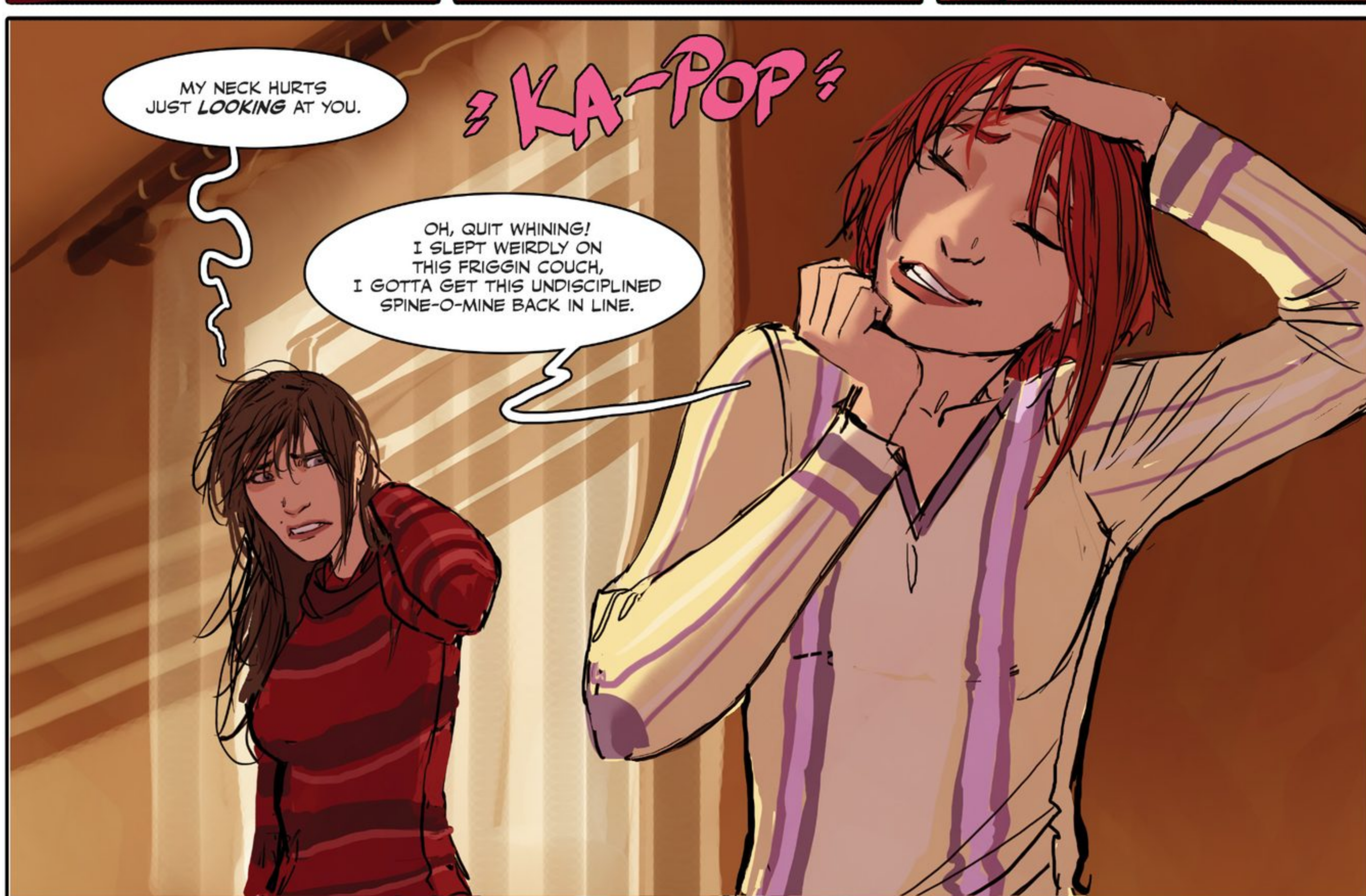








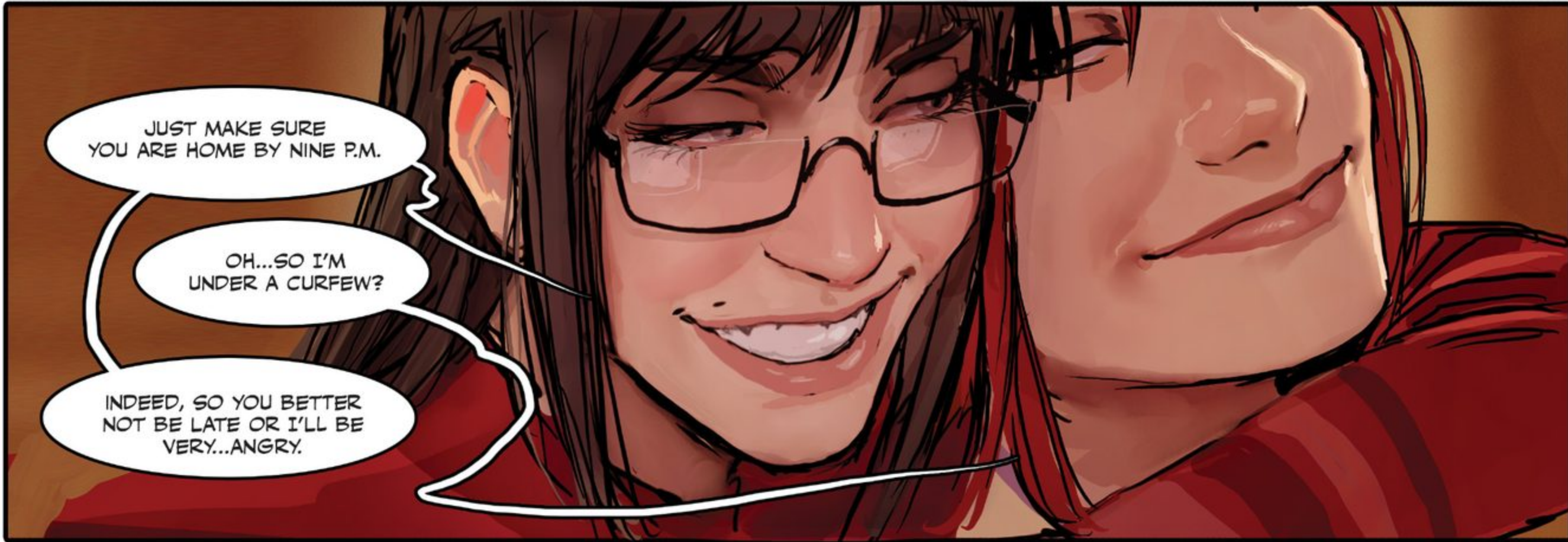








AH, WELL...  
I GUESS I'LL BE SPENDING  
MY FREE DAY JUST UNPACKING,  
MAYBE MEET CASSIE  
LATER OR SOMETHING.  
*SIGH...*



JUST MAKE SURE  
YOU ARE HOME BY NINE P.M.

OH...SO I'M  
UNDER A CURFEW?

INDEED, SO YOU BETTER  
NOT BE LATE OR I'LL BE  
VERY...ANGRY.



NOTE TO SELF...  
BE BACK AT 9:30...



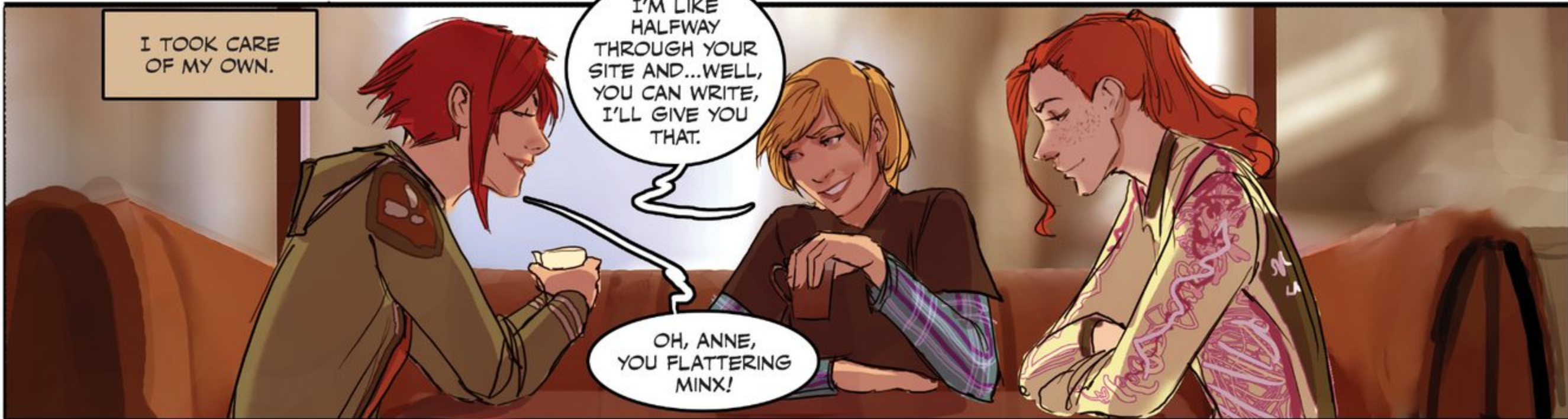
MY FIRST DAY WAS GENERALLY  
UNEVENTFUL. SOME UNPACKING...



WASTING TIME  
ONLINE...



AND WHILE ALLY WAS  
HANDLING HER MEETINGS...



I TOOK CARE  
OF MY OWN.

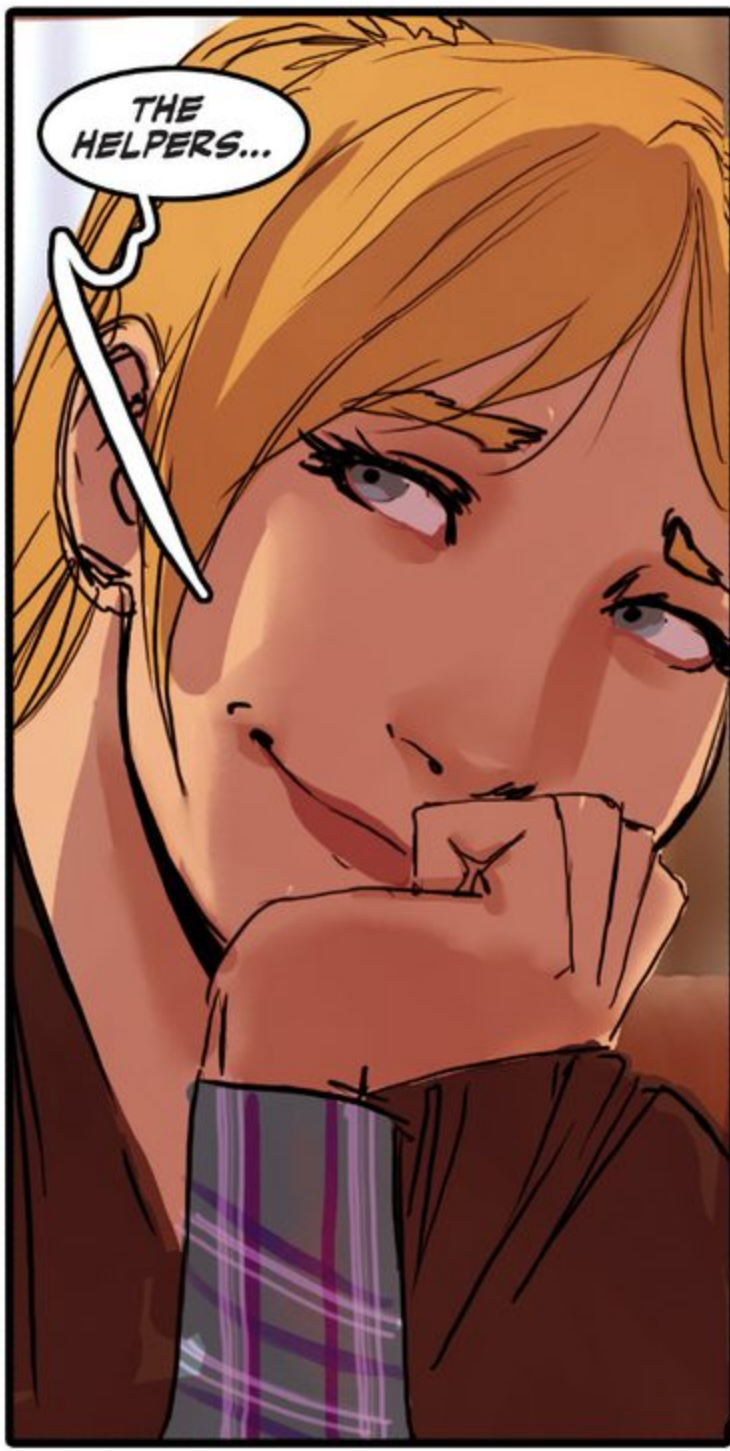
I'M LIKE  
HALFWAY  
THROUGH YOUR  
SITE AND...WELL,  
YOU CAN WRITE,  
I'LL GIVE YOU  
THAT.

OH, ANNE,  
YOU FLATTERING  
MINX!





ANNND...  
WHICH WAS YOUR  
FAVORITE STORY  
SO FAR?



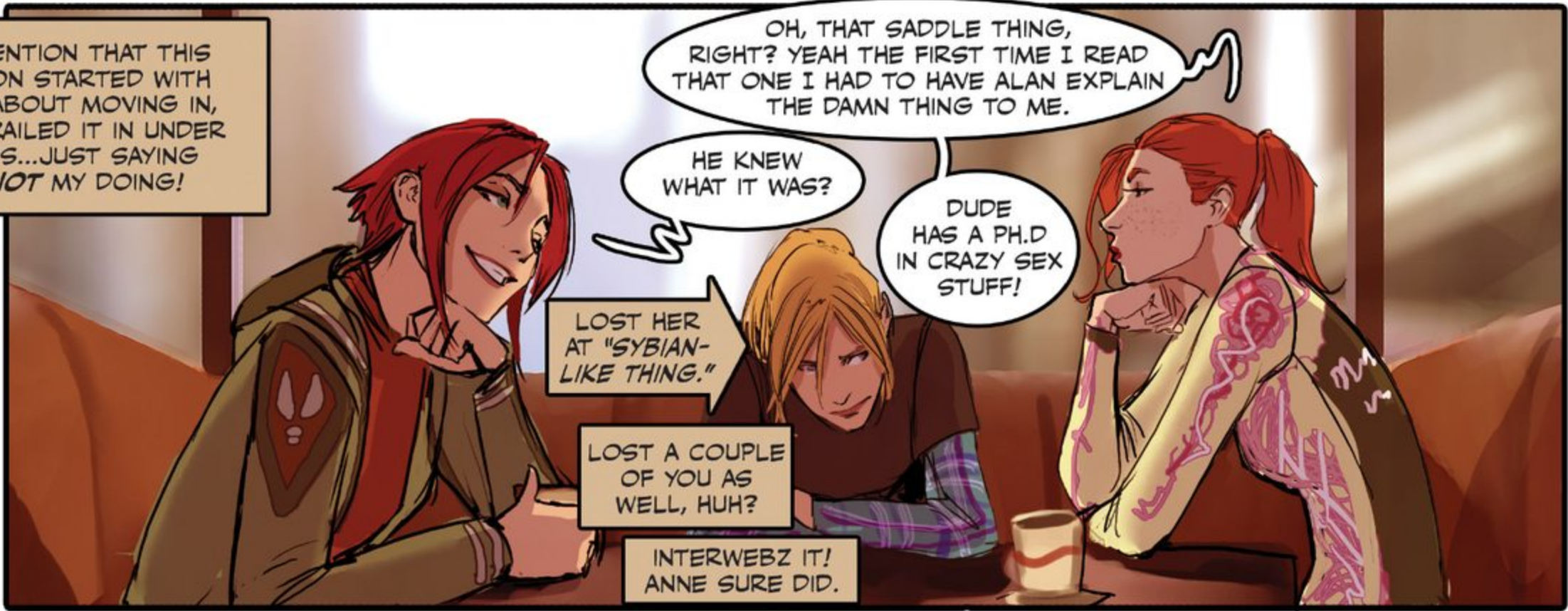
THE  
HELPERS...



UM...SO I  
GOTTA ASK, THE  
PART WITH THE GIRLS  
BOUND TOGETHER  
RIDING THAT TIMED  
THING...IS THAT FROM  
EXPERIENCE, OR?

HEH...NO.  
Y'KNOW, SOMETIMES I  
SEE SOME TOYS ONLINE,  
AND I KINDA BUILD A SCENE  
AROUND THEM. BUT IT'S  
JUST A FANCY SYBIAN-  
LIKE THING.

I SHOULD MENTION THAT THIS  
CONVERSATION STARTED WITH  
ME TALKING ABOUT MOVING IN,  
AND ANNE DERAILED IT IN UNDER  
FIVE MINUTES...JUST SAYING  
THIS WAS **NOT** MY DOING!



OH, THAT SADDLE THING,  
RIGHT? YEAH THE FIRST TIME I READ  
THAT ONE I HAD TO HAVE ALAN EXPLAIN  
THE DAMN THING TO ME.

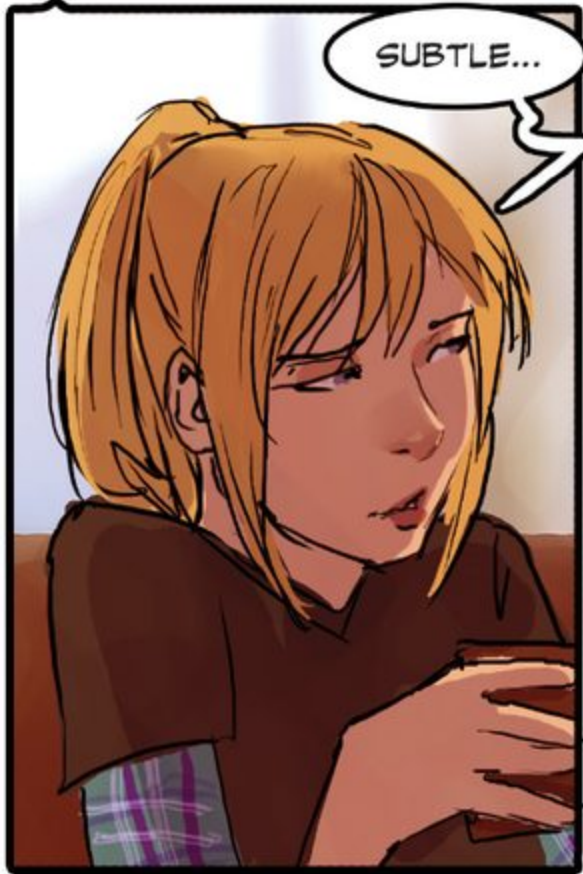
HE KNEW  
WHAT IT WAS?

DUDE  
HAS A PH.D  
IN CRAZY SEX  
STUFF!

LOST HER  
AT "SYBIAN-  
LIKE THING."

LOST A COUPLE  
OF YOU AS  
WELL, HUH?

INTERWEBZ IT!  
ANNE SURE DID.



SUBTLE...



HEY, JUST  
SAY THE WORD  
AND I'LL HOOK  
YOU UP.

WITH  
"MASTURBATING  
INTO BLINDNESS" GUY?  
OH, BE STILL MY  
HEART!



YOU DO  
KNOW THAT WAS  
A JOKE?

YEAH, YEAH...SO,  
LISA, 'FESS UP! HOW  
MUCH OF THE STUFF YOU  
WROTE IS EXPERIENCE-  
BASED?



HEH...NONE, REALLY.  
I MEAN, BEFORE ALLY THERE  
WAS NO ONE I SHARED THIS SIDE  
OF ME WITH.



SO, THESE STORIES ARE  
PRETTY MUCH AN INSIGHT INTO  
THE FANTASIES OF A  
SUBMISSIVE?

WELL...NOT **EVERY**  
SUBMISSIVE BUT THEY TICKLE **MY**  
SPECIAL SPOTS, I GUESS.

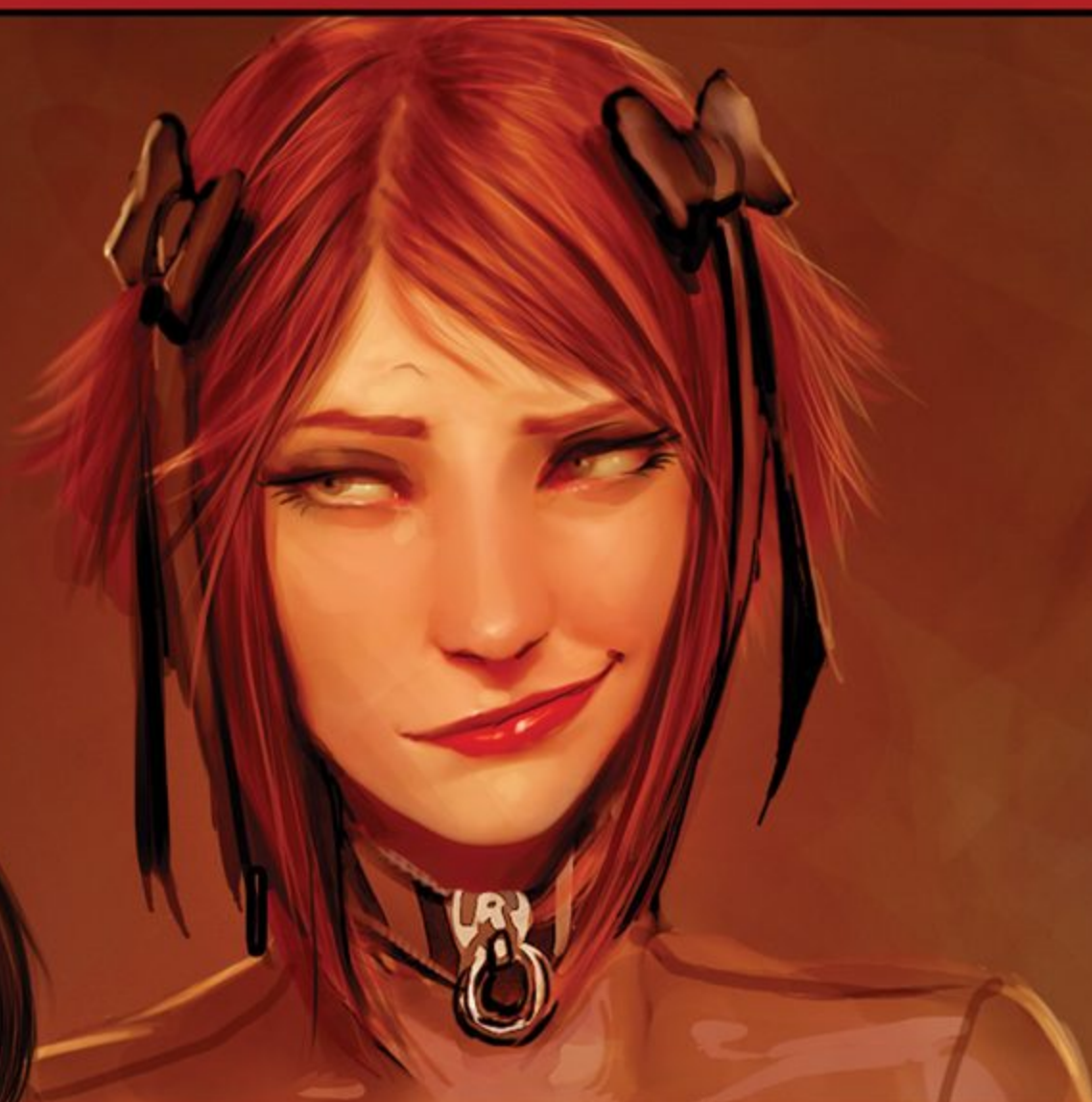
SO IS IT, LIKE...  
DIFFERENT IN  
REALITY?

OH, YEAH, WAY MORE  
PRECAUTIONS, EFFORT AND  
COMPROMISE...



AND A WHOLE  
LOT MORE  
*ROLEPLAYING*.

REALLY, WITH  
THE BOW TIES?  
A LITTLE *TACKY*,  
DON'T YOU  
THINK?



I SEE...SO  
*FIRST* YOU ARE LATE,  
AND THEN YOU THINK YOU  
ARE ENTITLED TO GIVE ME  
*LIP* ABOUT MY FASHION  
CHOICES?

OH, I THINK  
*NOT*, MISSIE!

DID I MENTION THAT  
WE SERVED OUR  
ROLEPLAYING PIZZAS  
WITH EXTRA *CHEESE*?





I LOVED IT!

NOW, LET'S DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT LIP OF YOURS!

SEE, THE THING ABOUT THIS WHOLE ROLEPLAYING BUSINESS WAS...WELL, IT HAD A PURPOSE...

YES... MISTRESS.

I BET YOU THOUGHT IT WAS REAL FUNNY TO KEEP ME WAITING LIKE THAT... TWENTY-FIVE MINUTES LATE...OOOH NO... WE CAN'T HAVE THAT!

MNUH!!!

COME ALONG, NOW! TIME TO TEACH YOU A LESSON IN PUNCTUALITY!

IT WAS THERE TO HELP US MENTALLY SINK INTO OUR ROLES, THE DOMME, AND THE SUBMISSIVE.

SURE, IT STARTED CHEESY, AND TONGUE-IN-CHEEK, BUT THEN YOU GET INTO THAT MINDSET.

LET'S MAKE IT A SLAP PER MINUTE, WHAT DO YOU THINK?

MMPF!

EXCELLENT!

SOME CALL THESE STATES OF MIND A SUBSPACE AND A DOMSPACE.

SLIPPING INTO THEM WAS POWERFUL...

IT WAS A TESTAMENT TO JUST HOW STRANGELY DIFFERENT THE SEXUAL MIND IS FROM THE RATIONAL.

ON AN AVERAGE MOMENT I WAS LISA, A WRITER/WAITRESS. I'D CONSIDER MYSELF OPINIONATED, ARGUMENTATIVE, OFTEN SARCASTIC...

BUT DURING OUR SEXY TIMES, IN MY SUBSPACE I WAS HER SUBMISSIVE... A PLAYTHING. A WILLING PARTICIPANT IN HER DEVIANT EXPERIMENTS.

ALLY WAS A MILD-MANNERED PROGRAMMER (UNLESS SHE WAS GAMING). SHE WAS SMART, FUNNY -- SOMETIMES, A BIT OF A DUMBASS...

IN HER DOMSPACE SHE WAS DEVIANT, AGGRESSIVE, AND YES, A BIT SADISTIC...

THE SEXUAL MIND... IT'S WEIRD, AND IT'S POWERFUL...





AND HERE IS THE KICKER...

REGULAR SEX...YOU CAN GIVE IN  
TO THAT SEXUAL SIDE OF YOURSELF.

I HAVE KNOWN A FEW FRIENDS WHO  
HAVE SCREAMED AWFUL THINGS  
AT THEIR PARTNERS DURING SEX.

(EMBARRASSMENT CAME LATER.)

MY POINT IS, THEY CAN  
JUST ABANDON REASON AND  
GO FULLY CARNAL...

IN BDSM...AT LEAST ONE HAS TO  
KEEP THE REASON BUS GOING...

MNNH!!!

USUALLY THAT'S  
THE DOMME.

YOU OKAY?

I REMEMBER THOSE  
DAYS WELL...

FIGURING OUT EACH  
OTHER'S LIMITS...  
LEARNING THE MOVES...

THAT VERY DAY, ALLY LEARNED  
JUST HOW MUCH PRESSURE SHE  
SHOULD APPLY WITH A STRAP-ON.

IT WAS HER FIRST  
TIME USING ONE...

THERE MAY HAVE BEEN  
A 5-MINUTE LAUGHING  
BREAK WHEN SHE  
ACTUALLY PUT IT ON...

HEH...FUNNY, THE SHIT  
YOU REMEMBER...

WEF! IF  
OFAW!

GOOD!

ANYHOO...I COULD SPEW YOU  
ALL SORTS OF NONSENSE ABOUT  
HER FERAL NATURE AND HOW SHE  
MADE ME FEEL UTTERLY HELPLESS  
AND AT HER MERCY, MELTING  
IN HER HANDS AND YADDAYADDA...

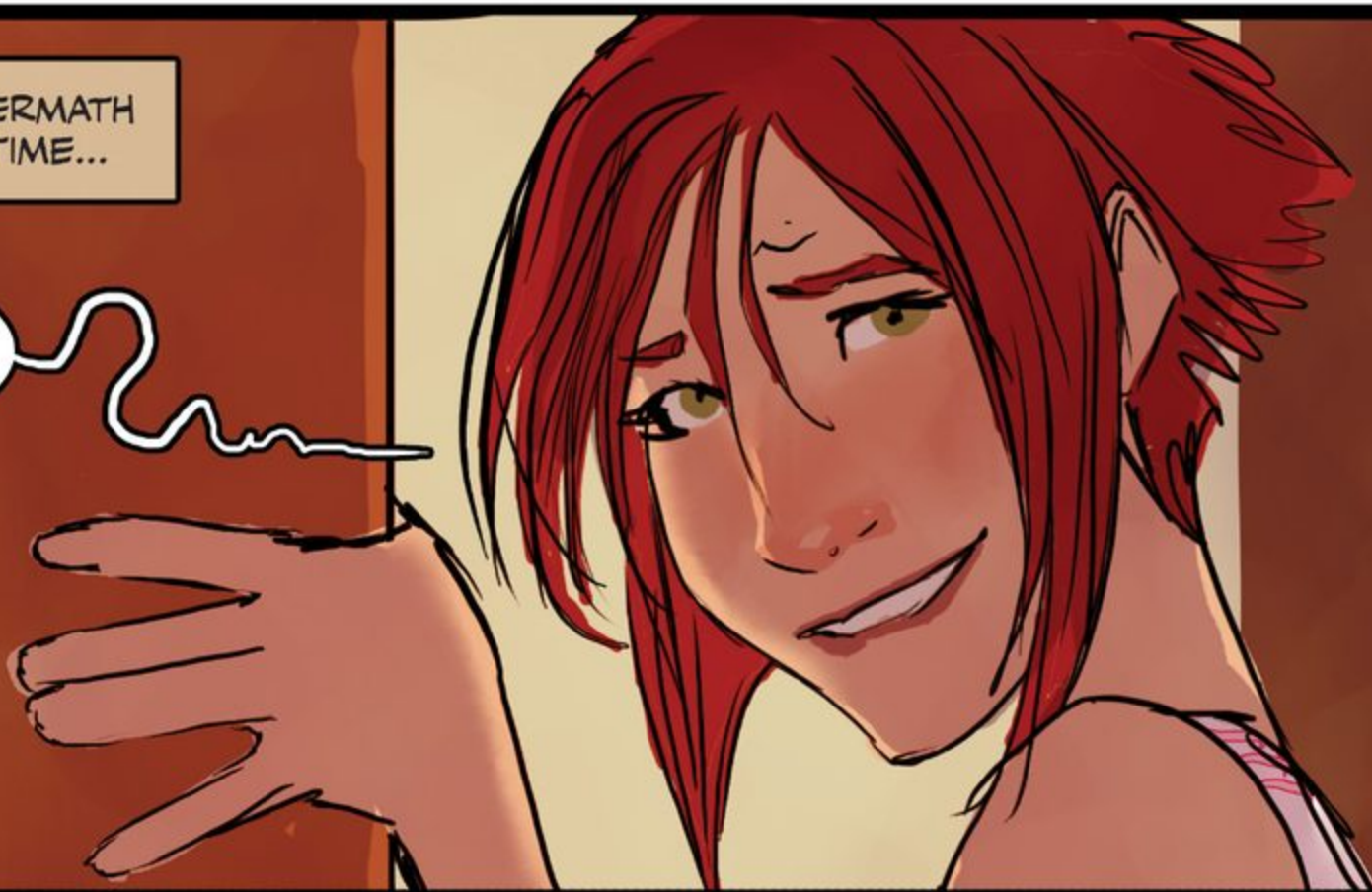


BUT THE THING IS...THE AFTERMATH  
WAS FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME...

UMM...WELL...  
SLEEP TIGHT!

WEIRD...

YEAH, I KNOW, CONSIDERING  
WHAT WE DO, THAT IS A VERY  
RELATIVE TERM, BUT BEAR  
WITH ME.



YEAH...  
YOU, TOO.

BEFORE, WHENEVER I'D VISITED  
AND WE HAD OUR FUN, WE SLEPT  
TOGETHER.

IT WAS FUN, WE TALKED OURSELVES  
TO SLEEP...BUT NOW IT WAS  
DIFFERENT. I WAS HER TENANT.

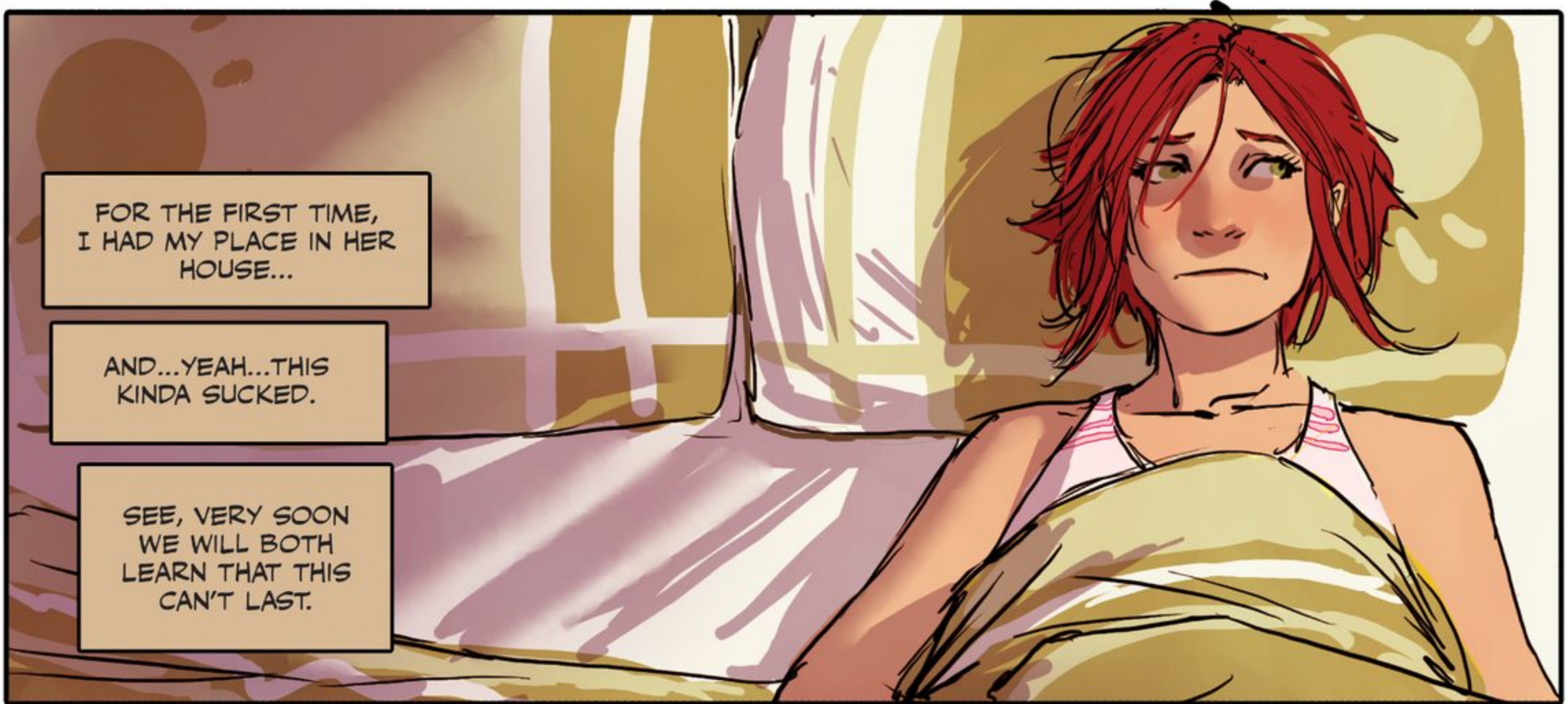
SHE PROBABLY DIDN'T  
WANT TO SEEM PRESUMPTUOUS.



FOR THE FIRST TIME,  
I HAD MY PLACE IN HER  
HOUSE...

AND...YEAH...THIS  
KINDA SUCKED.

SEE, VERY SOON  
WE WILL BOTH  
LEARN THAT THIS  
CAN'T LAST.



THE WHOLE  
"FRIENDS WITH BENEFITS" THING  
SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD IDEA IN  
THEORY...







BUT SOONER OR LATER,  
ONE WILL WANT MORE...



AND THEN COMES THE  
POINT OF DECISION.

YOU EITHER  
ADMIT YOUR  
FEELINGS...

OR YOU SIMPLY *HIDE* THEM...  
AND CONTINUE WITH THE *CHARADE*...



UM...HEY.

HEY!

SO, I KNOW  
YOU LIKED SOME OF  
MY COMICS AND  
I FIGURED...



WELL...YOU  
KNOW, *READING*  
AND STUFF...

AND ALSO, THERE  
IS A *MONSTER* UNDER  
MY BED WHICH MIGHT  
SCARE ME!

*THAT* TOO!  
WE CAN'T HAVE  
THAT!



I MEAN...*CHARADES* CAN BE  
NICE AT TIMES, TOO.

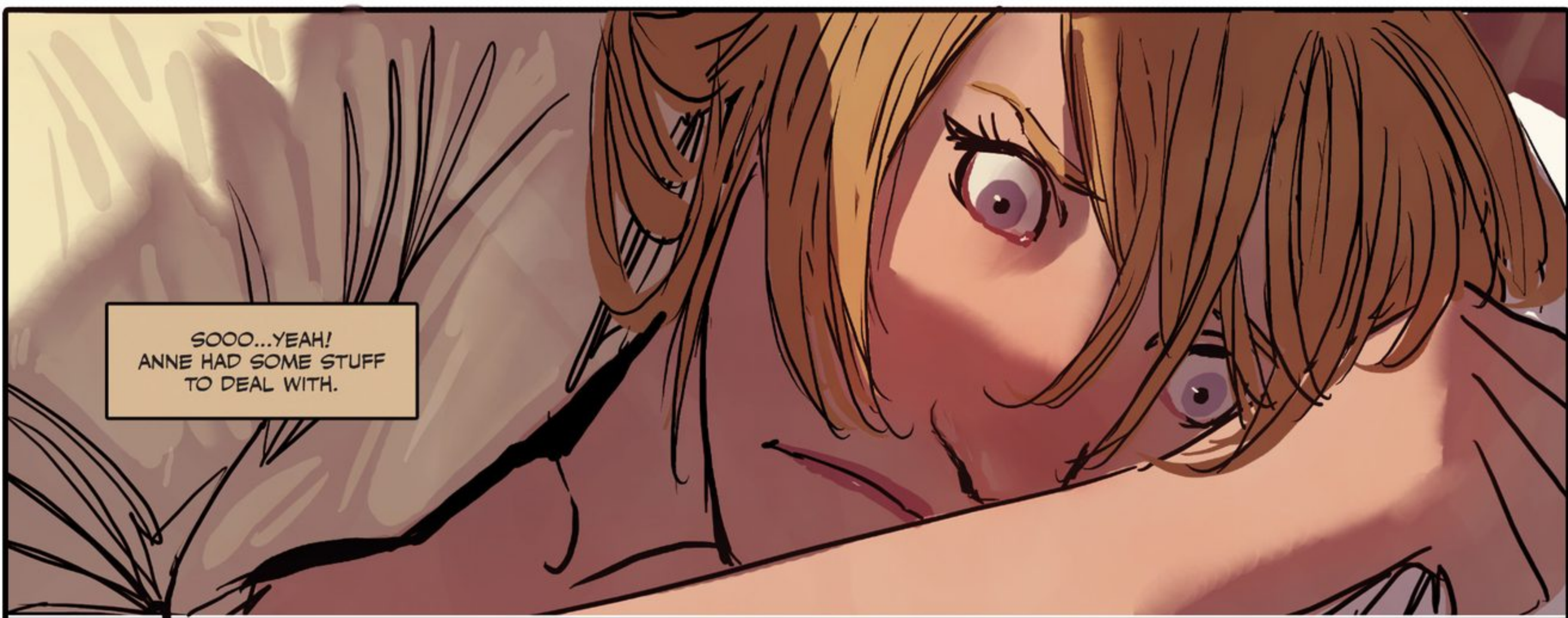
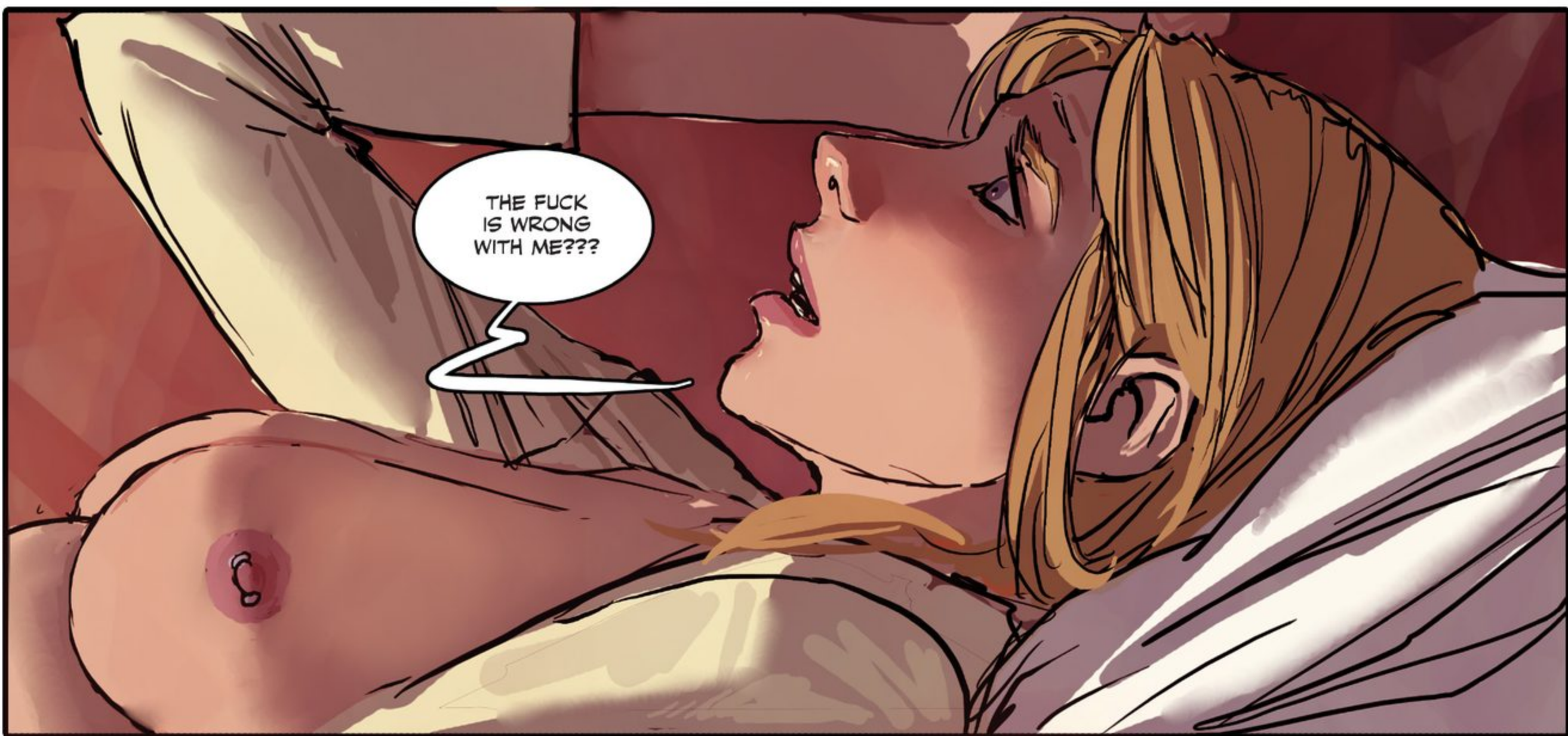
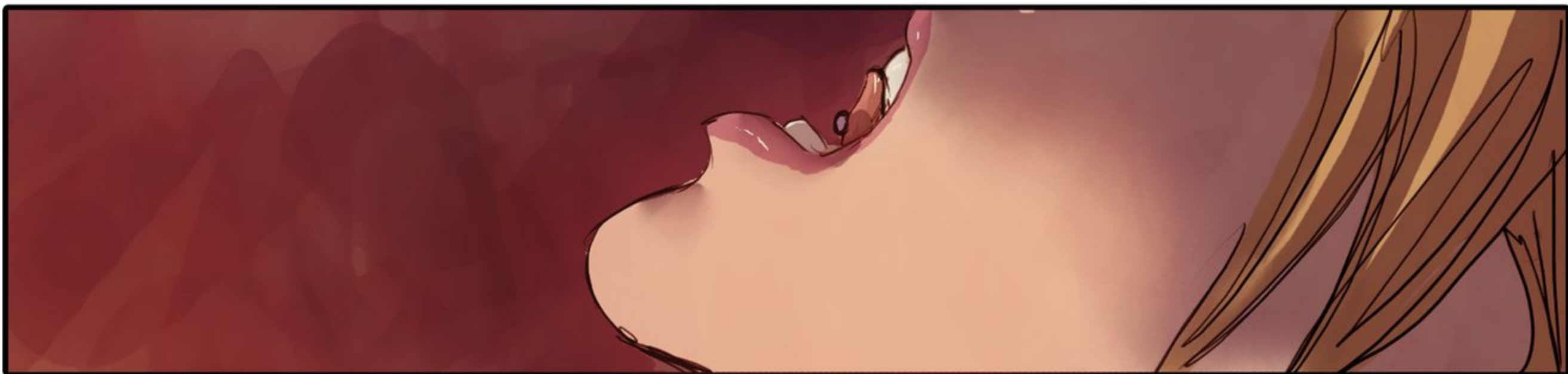




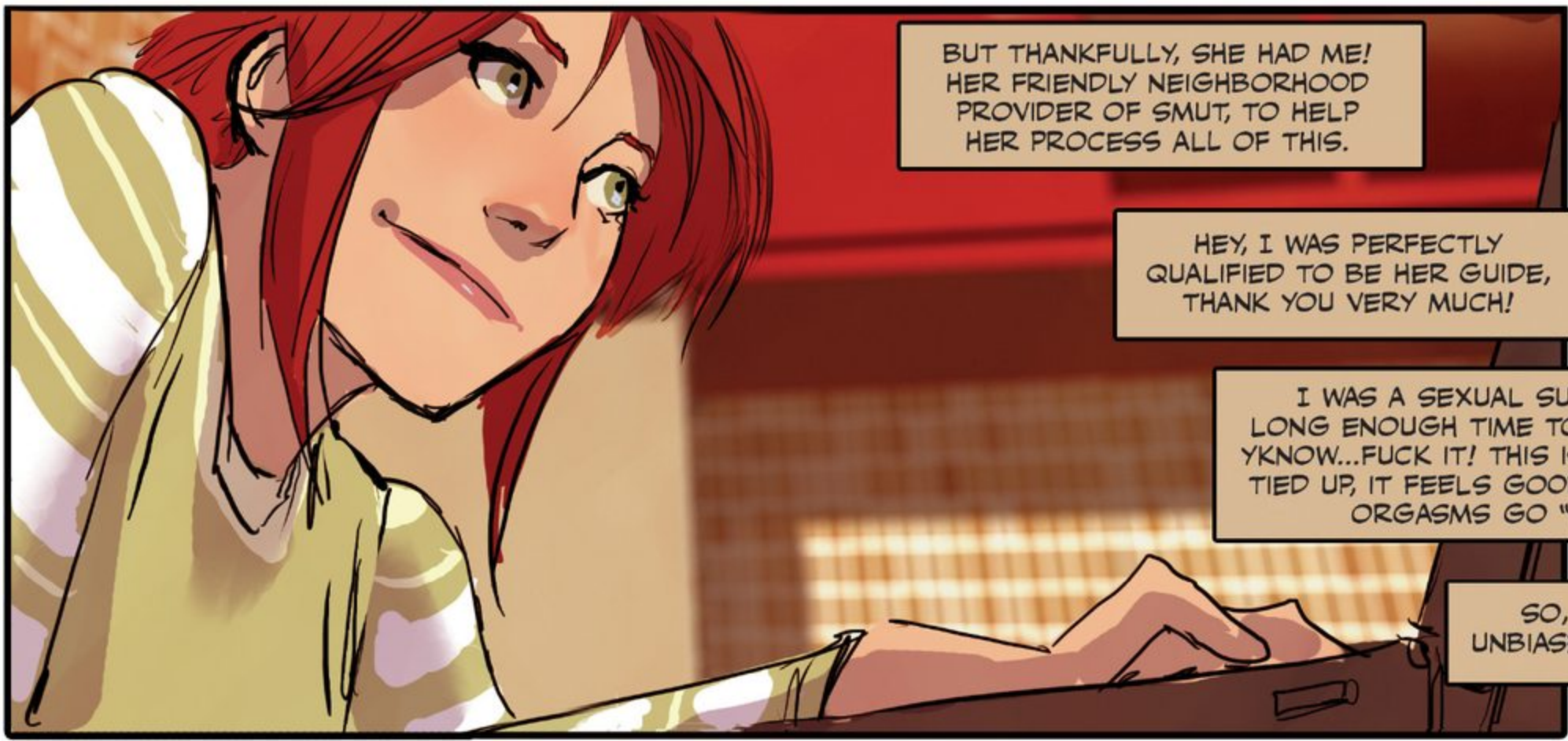












BUT THANKFULLY, SHE HAD ME!  
HER FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD  
PROVIDER OF SMUT, TO HELP  
HER PROCESS ALL OF THIS.

HEY, I WAS PERFECTLY  
QUALIFIED TO BE HER GUIDE,  
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

I WAS A SEXUAL SUBMISSIVE FOR A  
LONG ENOUGH TIME TO BE ABLE TO SAY...  
YKNOW...FUCK IT! THIS IS ME! I LIKE BEING  
TIED UP, IT FEELS GOOD AND IT MAKES MY  
ORGASMS GO "WEEEEEEEE!"

SO, YEAH...OBJECTIVE AND  
UNBIASED GUIDANCE RIGHT HERE!

DON'T GET ME WRONG, I WASN'T  
*REALLY* PUSHING THIS STUFF ON HER...  
SHE ASKED, I EXPLAINED...AND SHE  
ENDED UP GETTING INTERESTED.

VERY...*VERY*...  
INTERESTED.

AND THAT BOTHERED HER...  
THE QUICKNESS OF IT ALL...



BUT THAT'S JUST IT.  
PEOPLE CHANGE.

TASTES CHANGE!  
SOMETIMES IT TAKES  
A LONG TIME, AT OTHER  
TIMES IT'S SUDDEN.

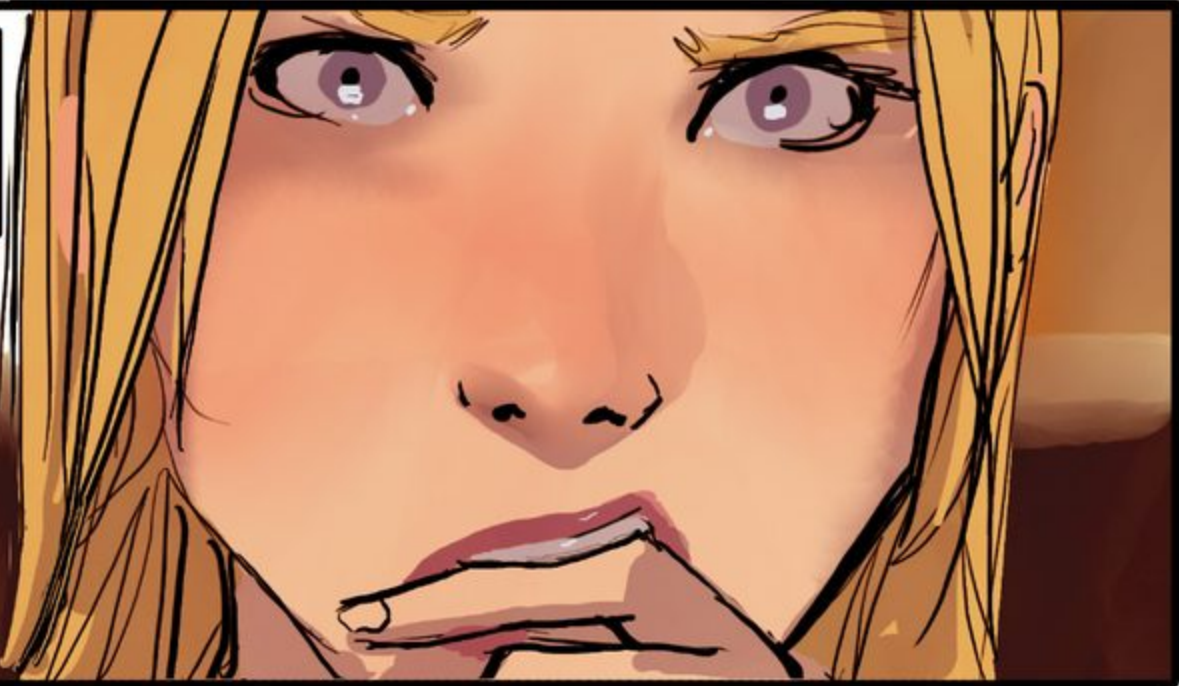
SO, ANNE DID WHAT MANY AT SOME  
POINT DO WHEN WE GET HIT BY A CRISIS OF  
SELF IMAGE...SHE TRIED RATIONALIZING IT.

FUNNY THING IS, SHE COULDN'T COME UP WITH MUCH BEYOND:  
"MAYBE IT WAS THE S/M WARDROBE?" AFTER ALL, SHE LOVED  
HARD ROCK AND METAL, AND SHE HAS SEEN THE EMPOWERING  
CONFIDENCE OF THE MUSICIANS WHO WORE RATHER SIMILAR STUFF...

TO HER GREAT ANNOYANCE, THE CHANGING NATURE OF  
A PERSONAL TASTE WAS NOT SO EASILY QUANTIFIABLE.

SOMEWHERE BACK IN THE DARK HIDDEN ROOMS  
OF HER MIND, A SEED OF AN IDEA TOOK ROOT.

MAAAAYBE THIS WAS SOMETHING SHE COULD  
GET OUT OF HER SYSTEM BY...TRYING IT OUT...



PROBLEM WAS *THE PARTNER*.

I MEAN...THE ONLY IDEA SHE HAD  
ABOUT A DOMME WAS WHAT SHE GOT  
FROM MY STORIES....

THIS INTENSE WOMAN...

THIS...*ALLISON*.



AND SHE KINDA WANTED  
TO MEET HER....

I HATE THE  
UNIVERSE!

WAZZUP,  
POOKIE?

AUNT  
FLO IS  
BACK!

AWWW...I GUESS  
YOU HAD SOME...  
PLANS?

SOOO MANY  
PLANS...GOOD PLANS,  
BRILLIANT PLANS.

UGH...SO, YOU  
SYNCHING UP  
WITH ME OR  
WHAT?

YEAH...THAT'S  
HOW THAT WORKS.  
ON COMMAND!

SIGH...GAY  
GUYS DON'T HAVE  
TO DEAL WITH THIS  
SHIT!

OOOOKAAAYYY...  
SO YOU ARE JUST GONNA  
DROP THAT LINE LIKE IT'S  
NO BIG DEAL?

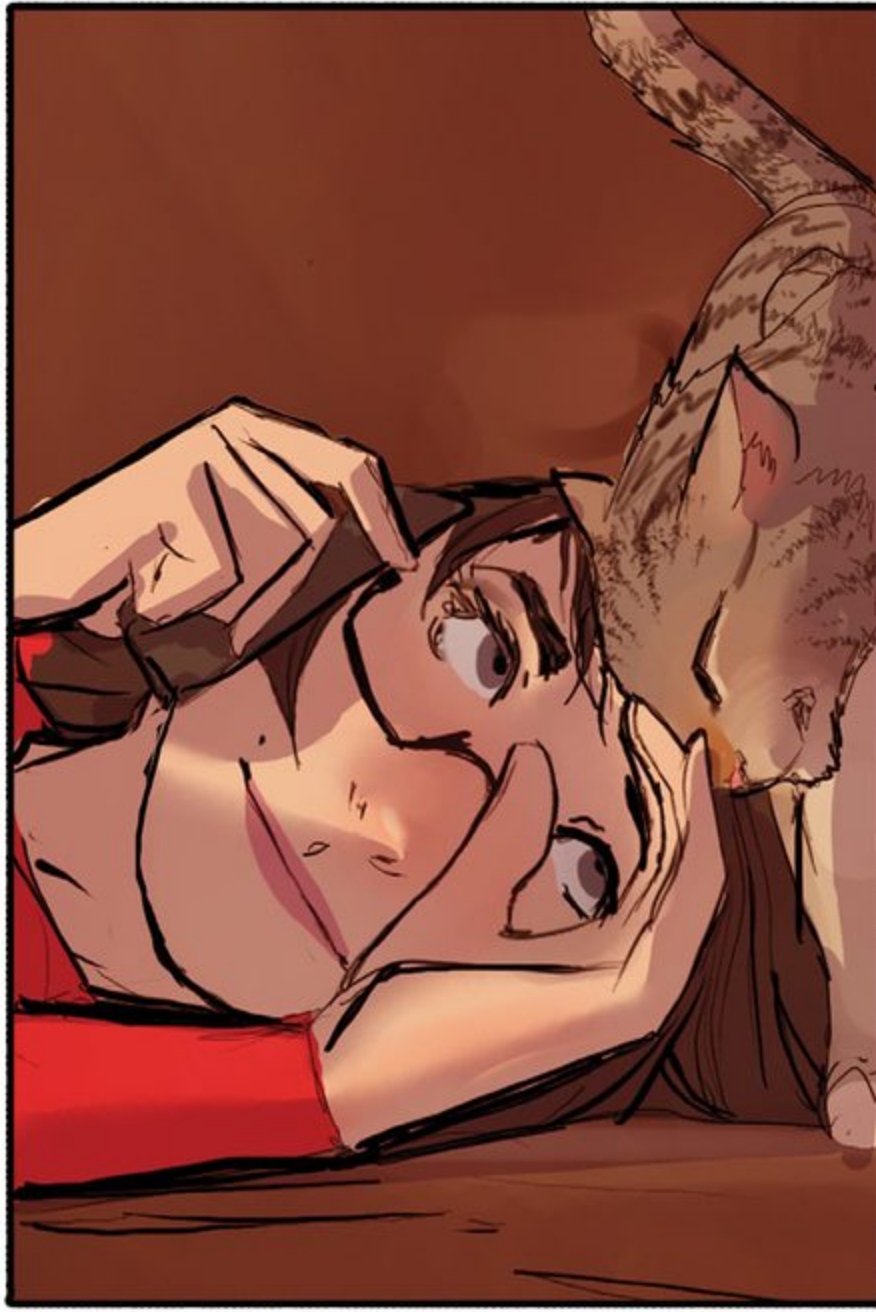
AHEM...

SOOO...UM.

YEAHHH...

I...GOTTA GO  
DO A SHIFT AT THE DINER NOW  
AND AFTER THAT I'M MEETING ANNE  
AND CASSIE FOR LUNCH TO FIGURE  
OUT HER NEXT TATTOO SESSION...  
YOU...WANNA JOIN US?  
MEET ANNE?









CHICKEN-BUTT! I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM YOU FOR DAYS, DUMBASS! JUST CHECKING TO SEE IF YOU ARE ALIVE!



HEH...WELL, Y'KNOW, I WANTED TO GIVE YOU GALS SOME SPACE FOR ALL YER WOMAN-TALKZ AND....YYYY'KNOOOOWW!



YEAH...NO Y'KNOWS FOR A FEW DAYS...NATURE IS BEING A DICK!



EW!



SO...YOU WANNA DROP BY MAYBE?

NAH, DEADLINE AHEAD! GOTTA FINISH SOME COSTUMES FOR AN EVENT. YOU TWO WANNA COME? IT'S TONIGHT AT "CRIMSON."



NOPE! GOT MORE THAN ENOUGH CRIMSON HERE!



AGAIN...EW!

SCREW YOU, ALAN!

LOVE YOU TOO, ALLY!



SIGH...

ALL WORK, NO PLAY MAKE ALLY...TALK TO HERSELF...IN THIRD PERSON... THAAAT'S HEALTHY!

AH, WELL... FUCK IT! GAME TIME!

GOOD OLD ESCAPISM. THERE FOR US IN GOOD TIMES AND BAD...



I WOULD KNOW...AFTER ALL, ESCAPISM WAS MY BREAD AND BUTTER.

LISBETH!

YES, MISTRESS?

AT LEAST TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE ARE PRETTY MUCH GUARANTEED TO HAVE CRAZY IDEAS: WRITERS, AND HORNY PEOPLE. WHAT I MEAN IS, BOTH ARE KNOWN TO SAY: "HEY, THIS SEEMED LIKE A GOOD IDEA AT THE TIME!"

I, MY DEAR READER, WAS BOTH. MY HEAD WAS FULL OF CRAZY IDEAS. AND I GLADLY PUT THEM INTO WRITING. NOW, OF THE MANY ADULT STORIES I WROTE BACK THEN, THE MOST POPULAR WERE THE *ALLISON AND LISBETH* SERIES...

IN A WAY, THEY STARTED AS MY LITTLE FLIRTATIONS WITH ALLY -- BACK WHEN WE WERE JUST "INTERNET FRIENDS." THESE STORIES WERE BOTH SEXUAL FANTASIES, AND CREATIVE VENTS.

SO...OKAY...WHY AM I EVEN MENTIONING THIS?

WELL...THESE STORIES STARTED OFF AS SIMPLE AND BLATANT SELF-INSERTS OF ALLY AND I. HOWEVER, A WRITER'S MIND IS A RESTLESS BEAST. SO I DID WHAT ANY WRITER DOES. TO ESCALATE THINGS, I ADDED ANOTHER CHARACTER.

FUNNY THING IS...THREESOMES RANKED QUITE LOW ON MY LIST OF SEXUAL FANTASIES, BUT THEY SURE WERE FUN TO WRITE.

SO, IN THE END, I CREATED *SARAH*...

IT SEEMED LIKE A GOOD IDEA AT THE TIME.

I WANT YOU TO MEET SARAH, OUR NEW...PLAYMATE. I WANT YOU TO SHOW HER AROUND, AND HELP HER... PREPARE FOR TONIGHT.

PROPERTY OF ALLISON

IT MAY HAVE BEEN A CASE OF WRITER'S LAZINESS, TOO. TWO SUBS AND ONE DOMME PRESENTED A RICH SUPPLY OF SITUATIONS...STORIES KIND OF WROTE THEMSELVES.

STORIES OF ALLY AND LISBETH WERE QUITE POPULAR...BUT WHEN I INTRODUCED THE NEW CHARACTER, SARAH, POPULARITY SKYROCKETED.

FOR SOME REASON, THE NEW, INEXPERIENCED SUB, RESONATED WITH MY AUDIENCE BACK THEN...

UM...HEY.

AND FOR REASONS OF HER OWN, ANNE STRONGLY RELATED TO SARAH...TO THE POINT THAT, IN HER FANTASIES, SHE *WAS* HER.

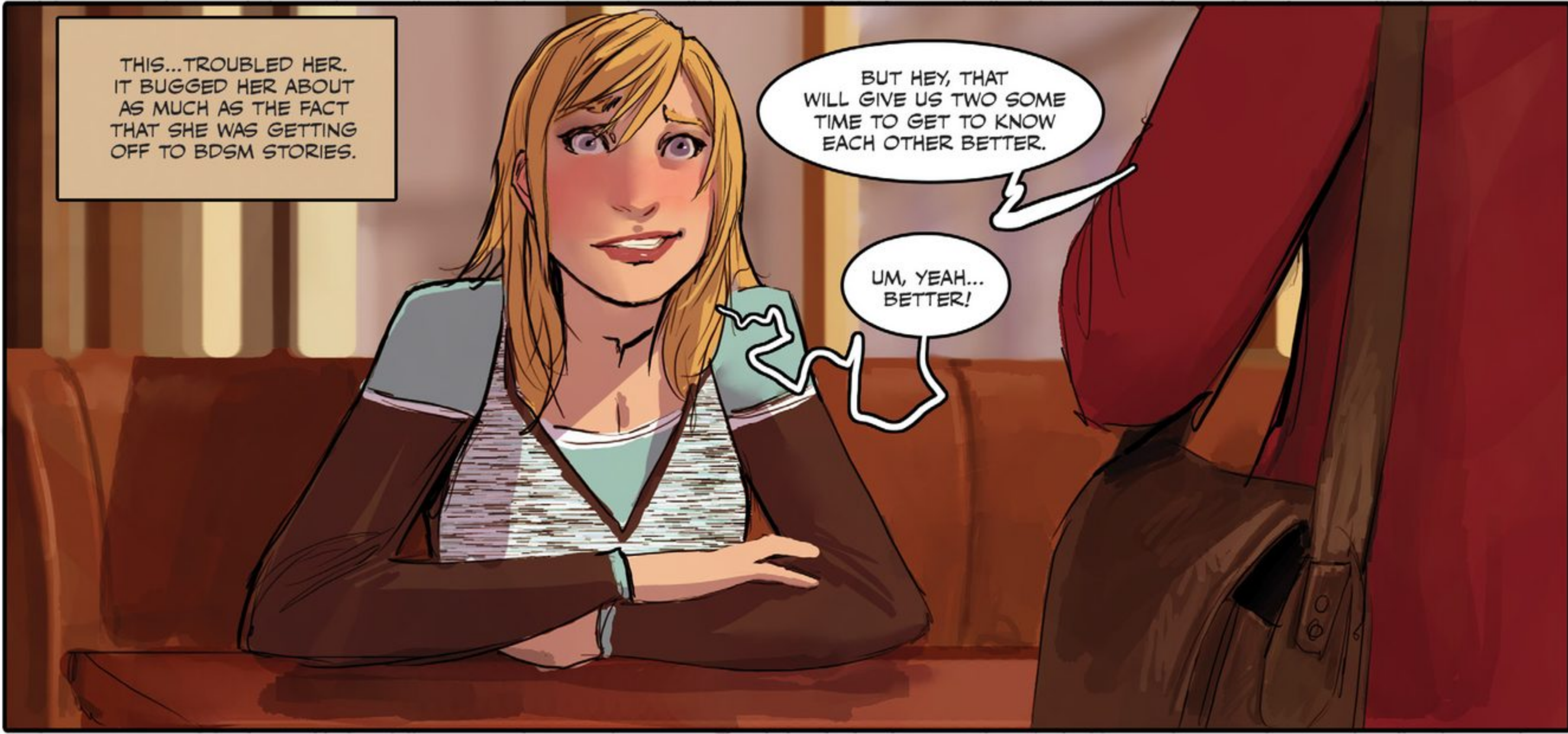




AND YES. IN HER MIND I WAS LISBETH.



HEY, ANNE! CASSIE WILL BE A BIT LATE!



THIS...TROUBLED HER. IT BUGGED HER ABOUT AS MUCH AS THE FACT THAT SHE WAS GETTING OFF TO BDSM STORIES.

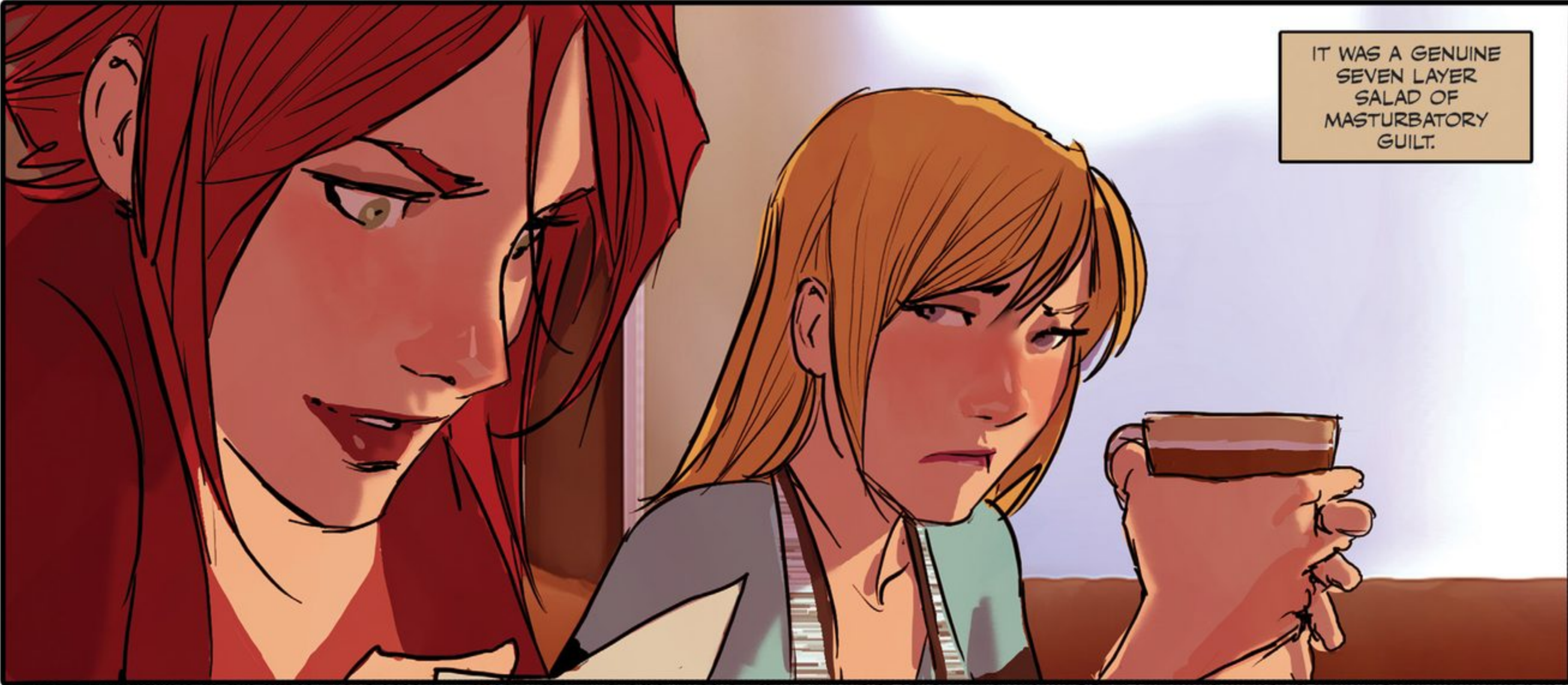
BUT HEY, THAT WILL GIVE US TWO SOME TIME TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER.

UM, YEAH... BETTER!



SCOOTCH OVER! I WANNA SHOW YOU SOMETHING!





IT WAS A GENUINE  
SEVEN LAYER  
SALAD OF  
MASTURBATORY  
GUILT.



NOOO, THIS ISN'T  
WEIRD AT ALL....

HEY LISA, GUESS WHO  
HAS BEEN A PROMINENT  
PART OF MY RECENT  
MASTURBATORY  
FANTASIES?

I'LL GIVE YOU A  
CLUE.

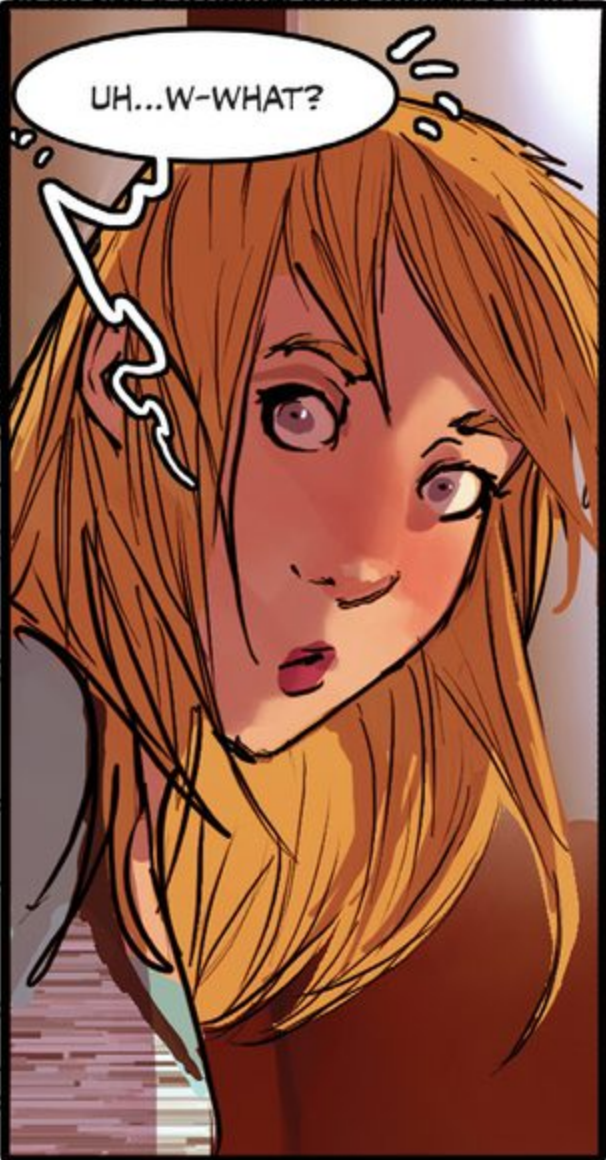


THERE ARE TWO  
OF THEM AND THEY  
ARE BOTH SITTING  
AT THIS TABLE.

THANKS A  
MILLION,  
CASSIE.



HEY,  
ANNE!



UH...W-WHAT?

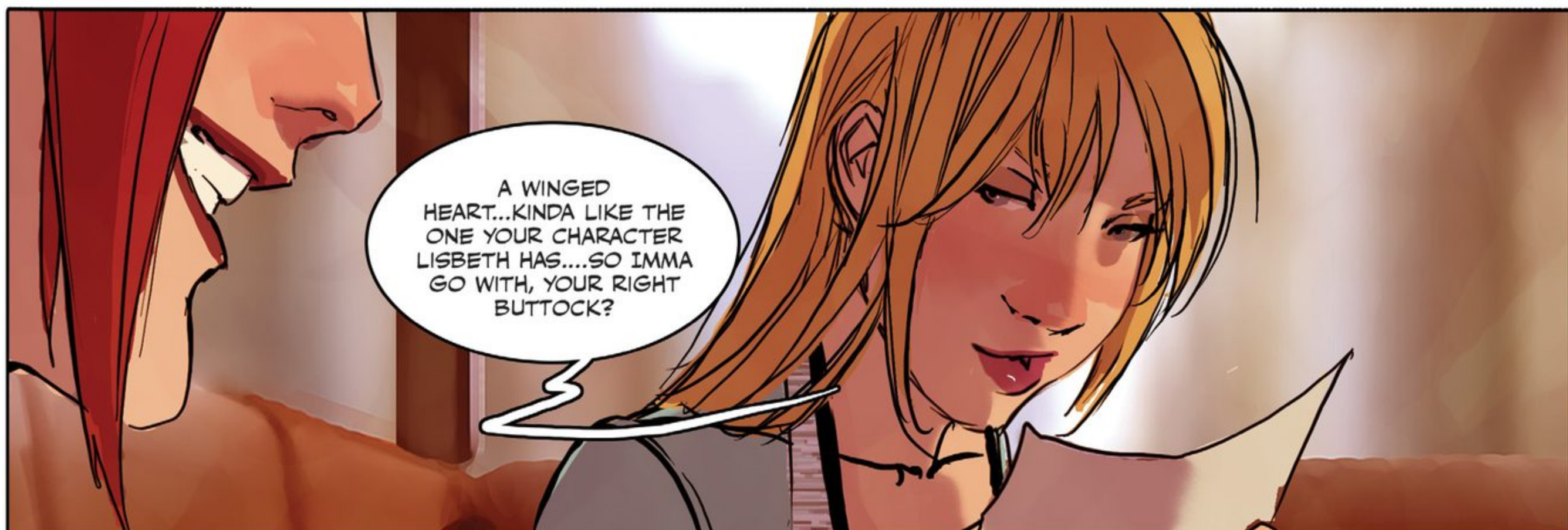
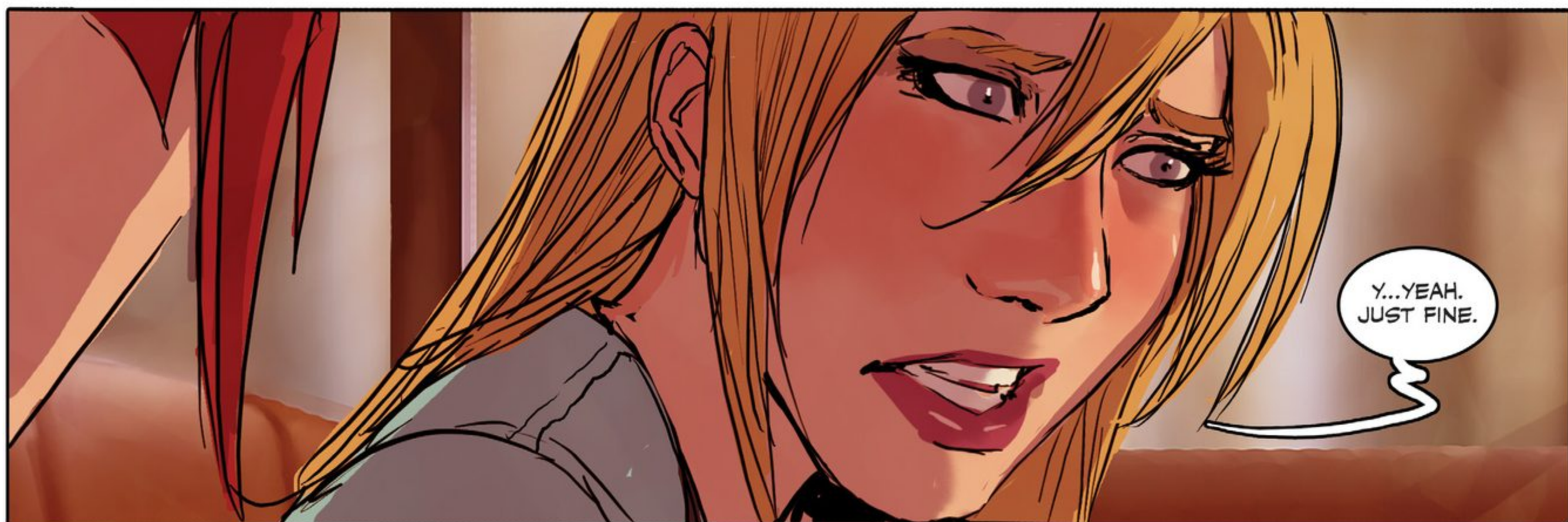
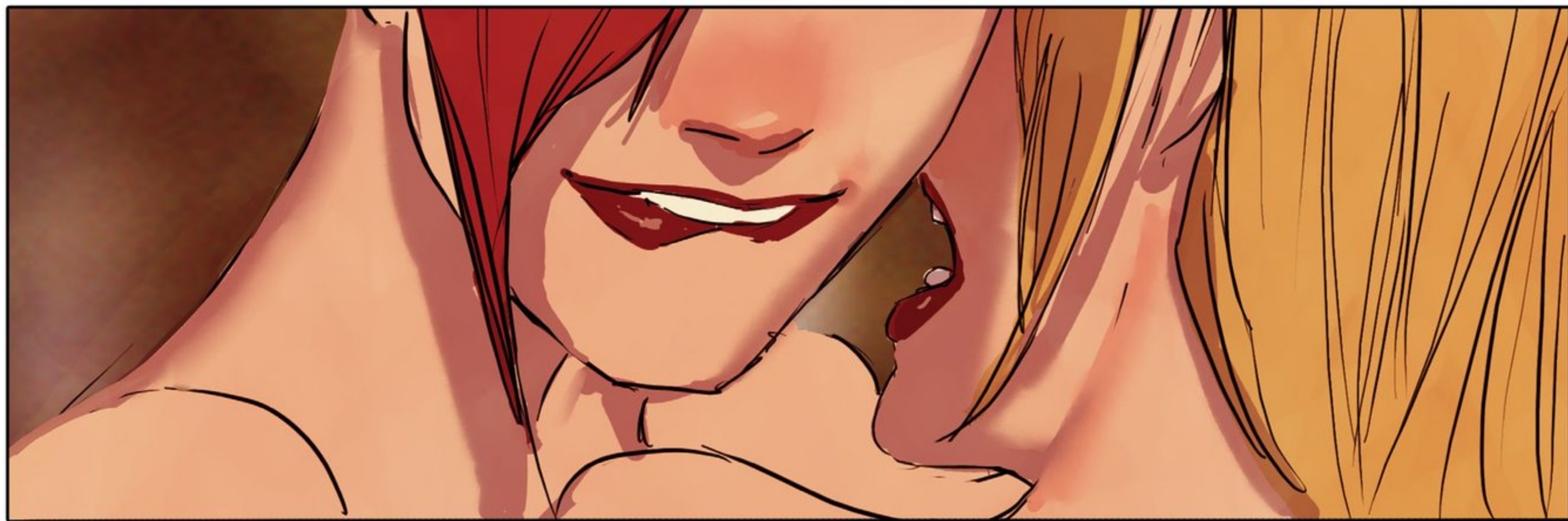


YOU...KINDA  
DRIFTED OFF  
THERE.

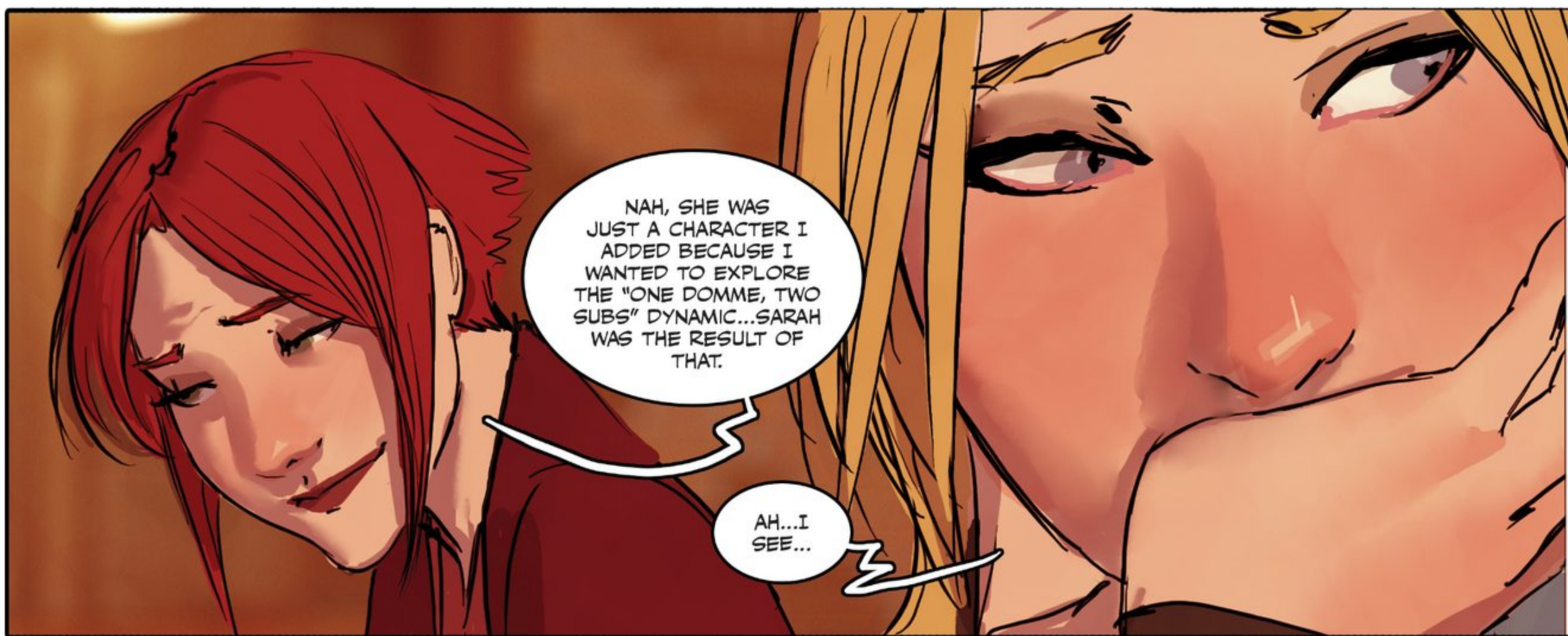
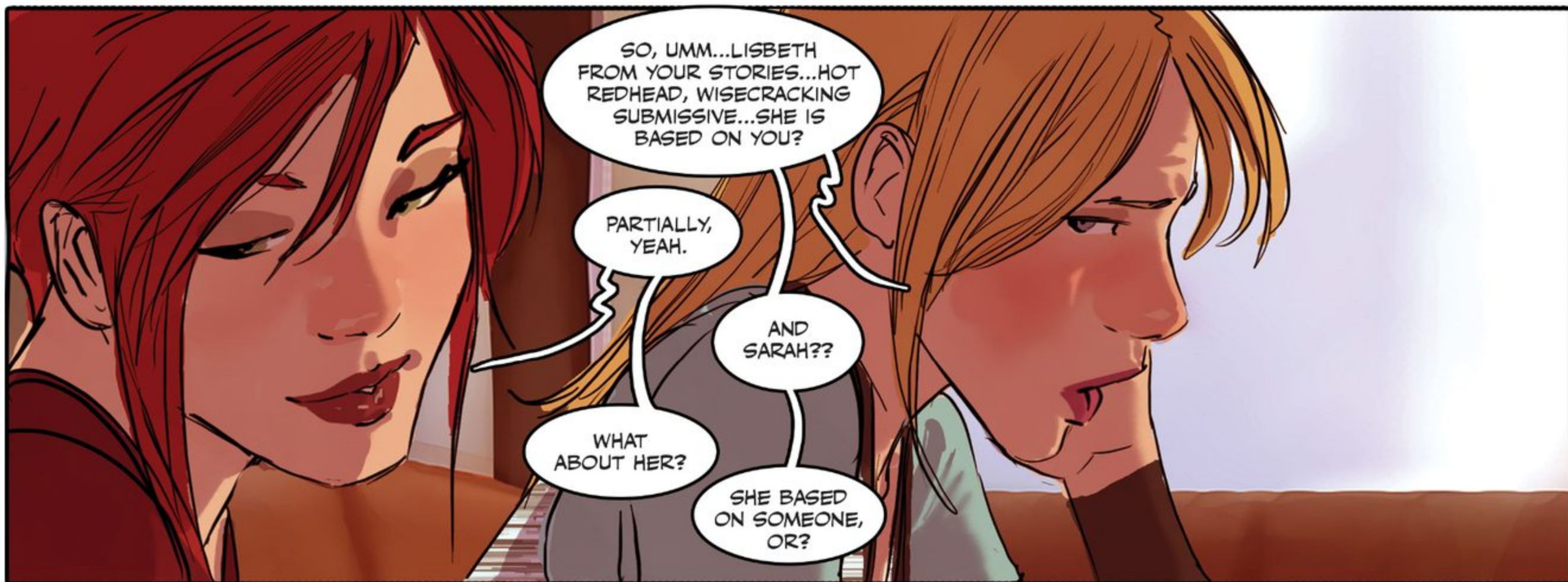


YOU OKAY?

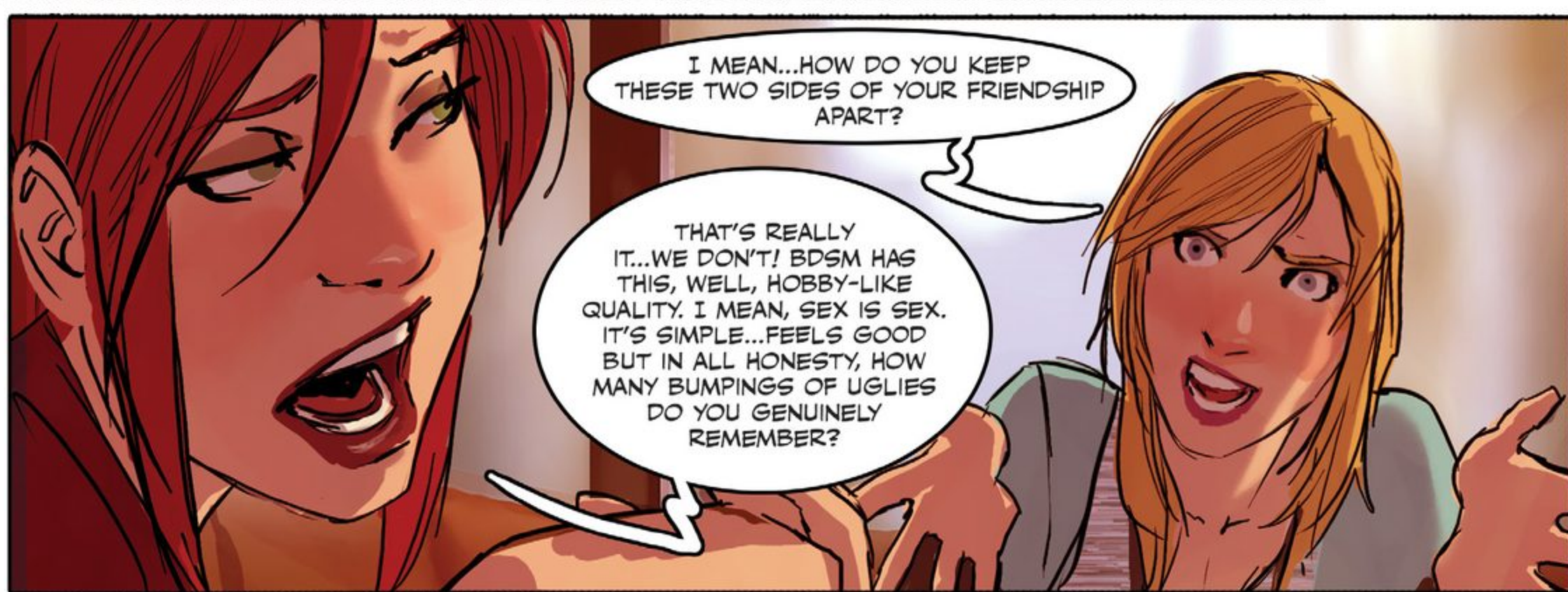
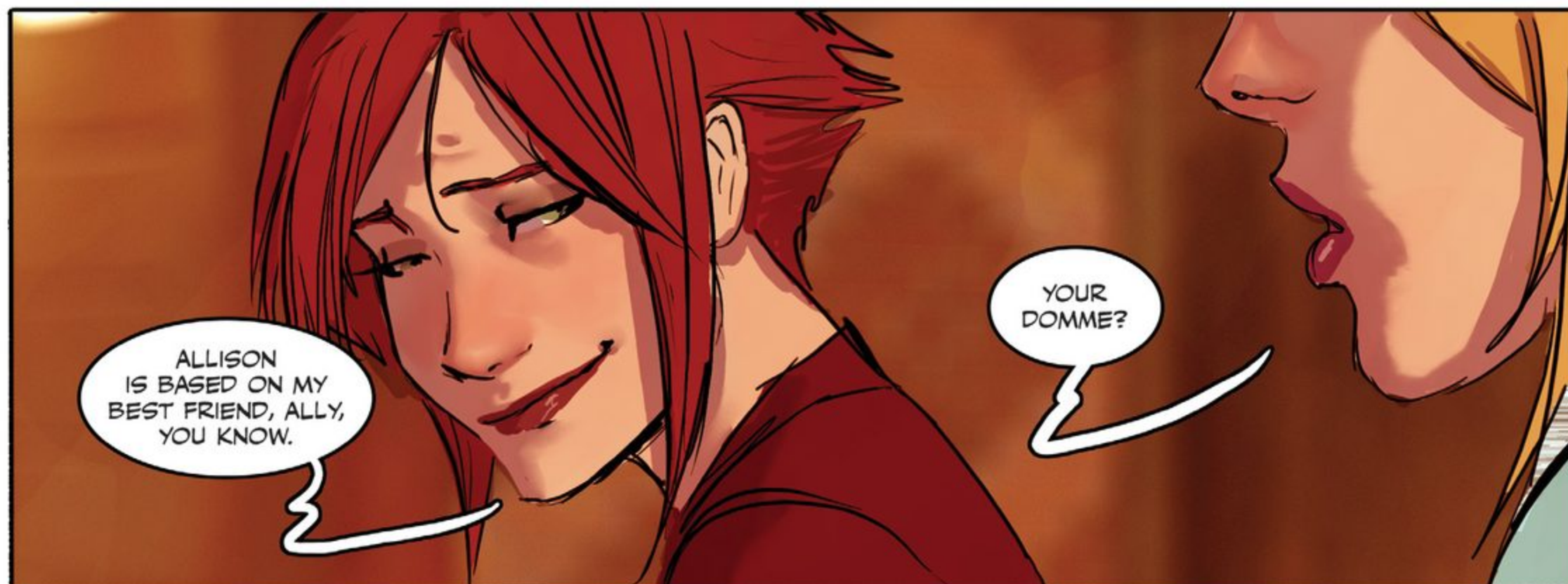




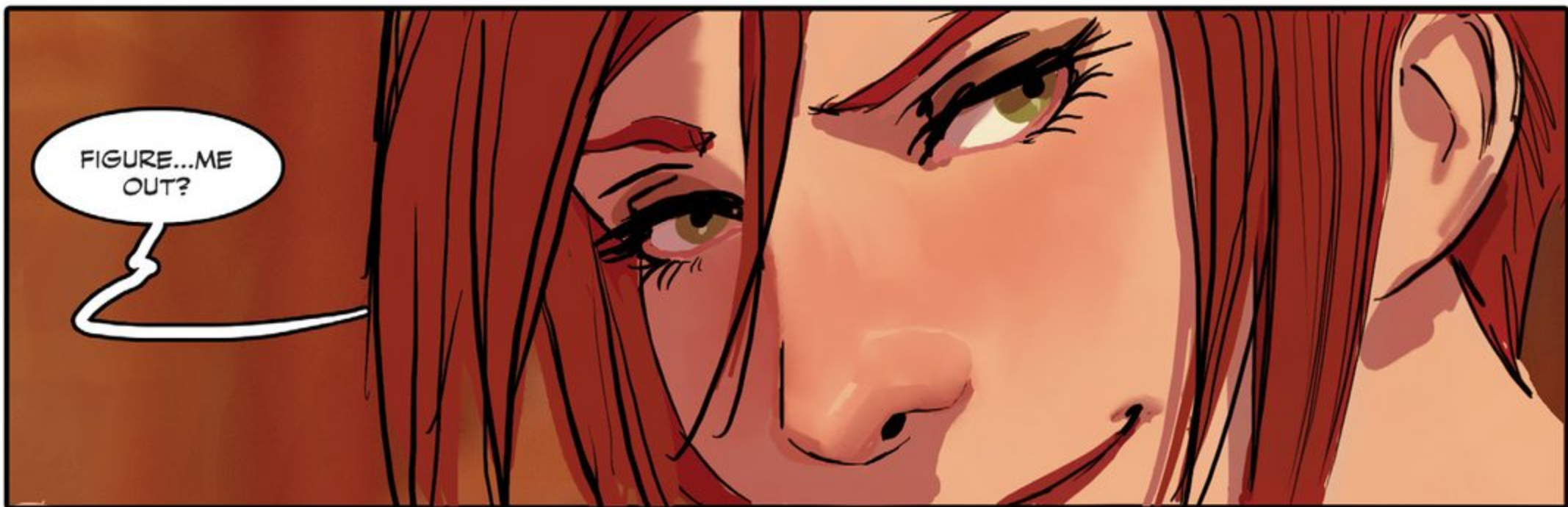
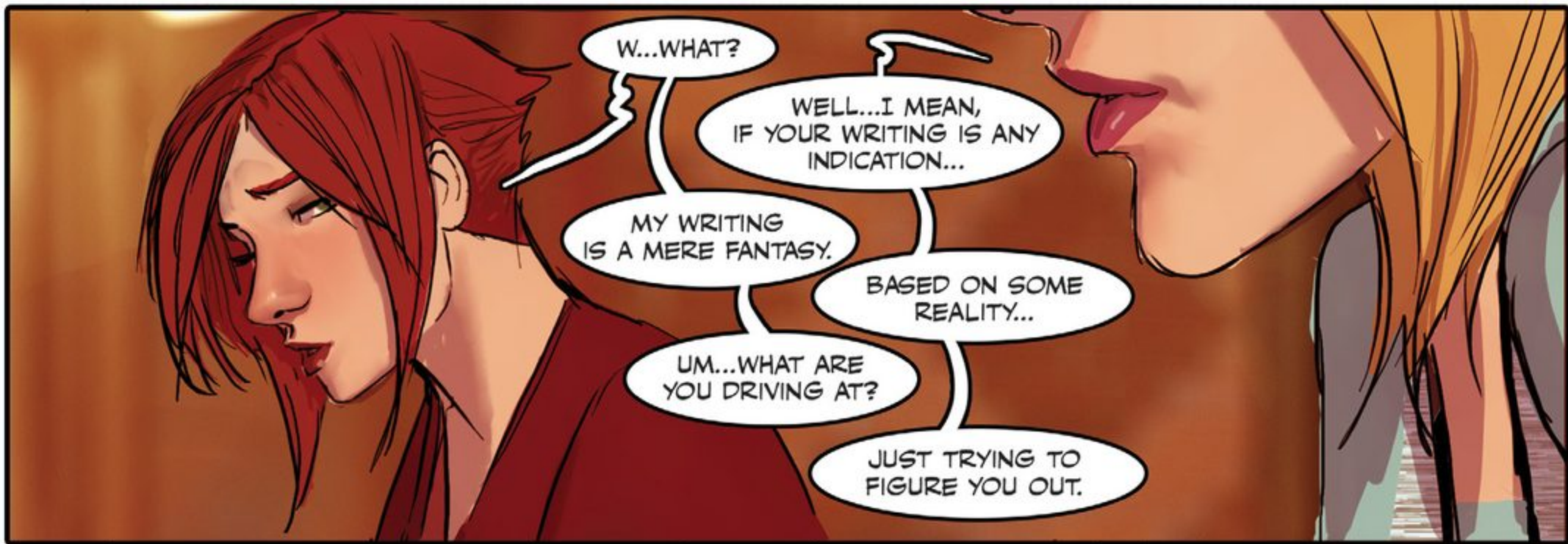
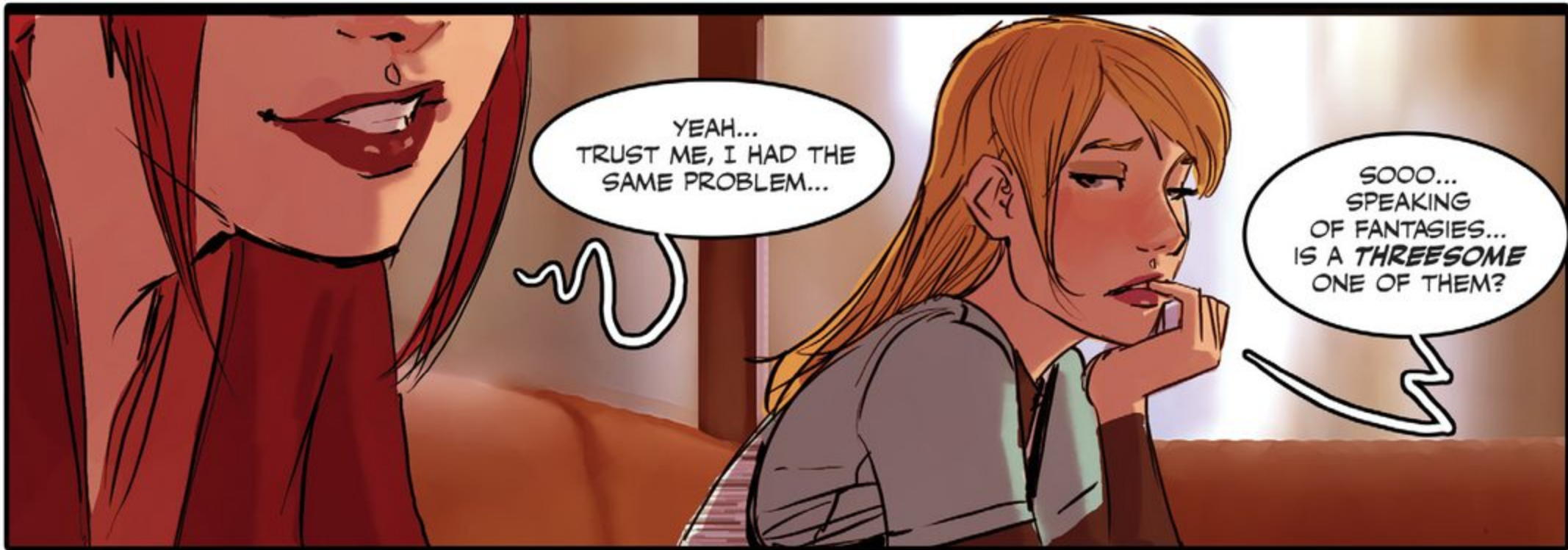




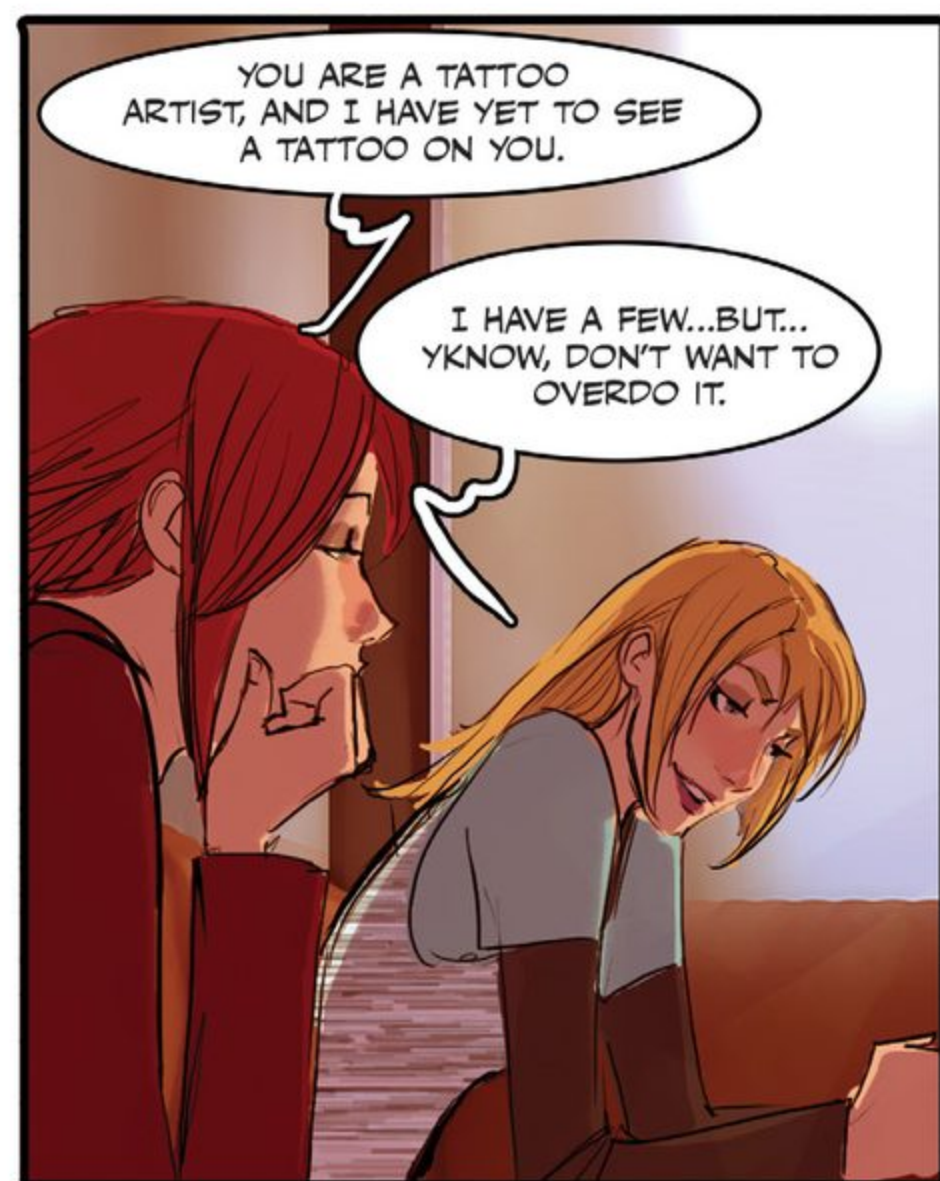
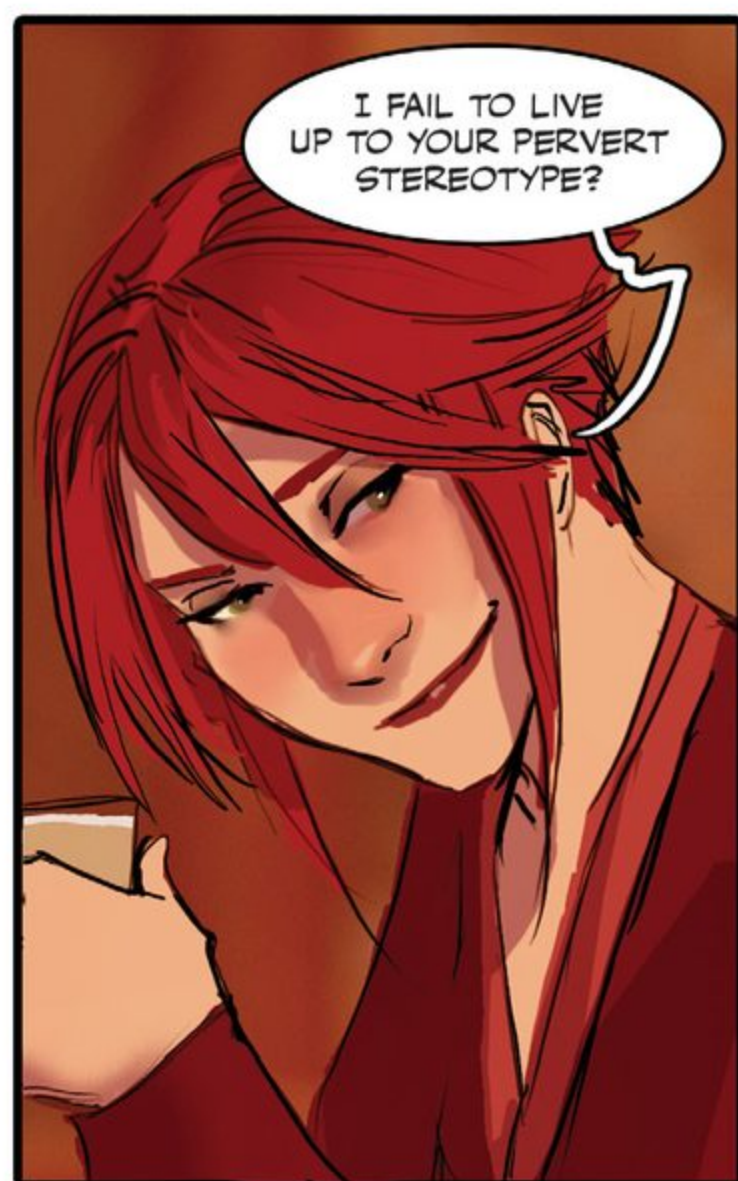
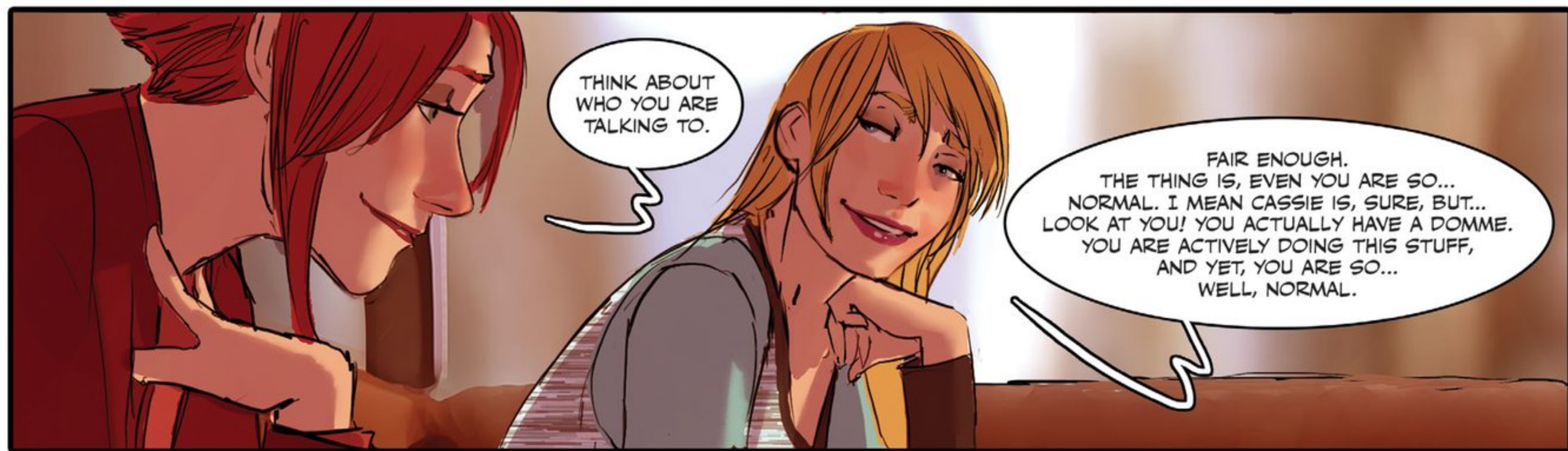




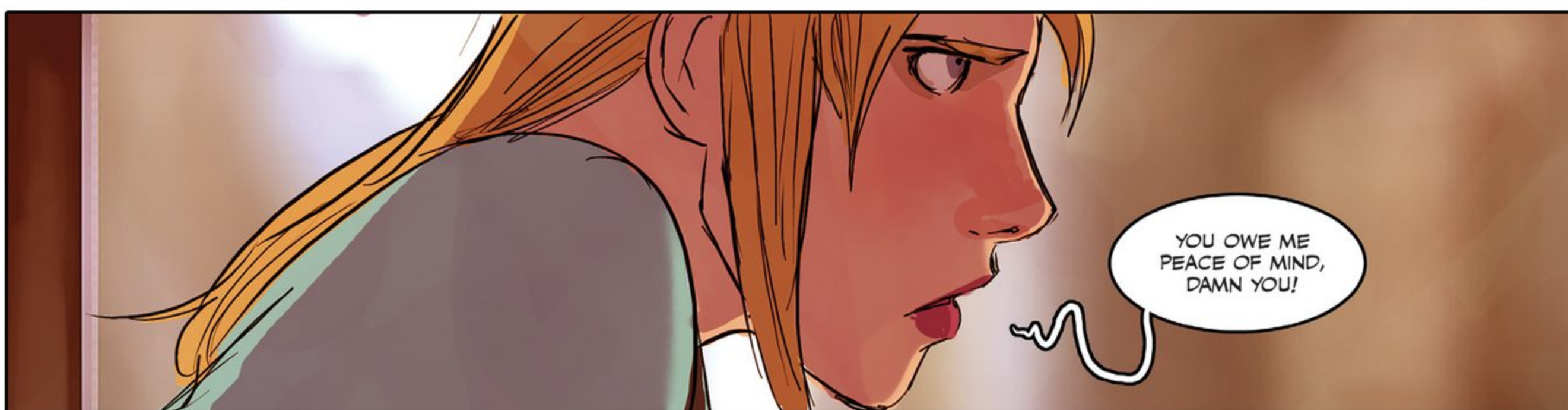
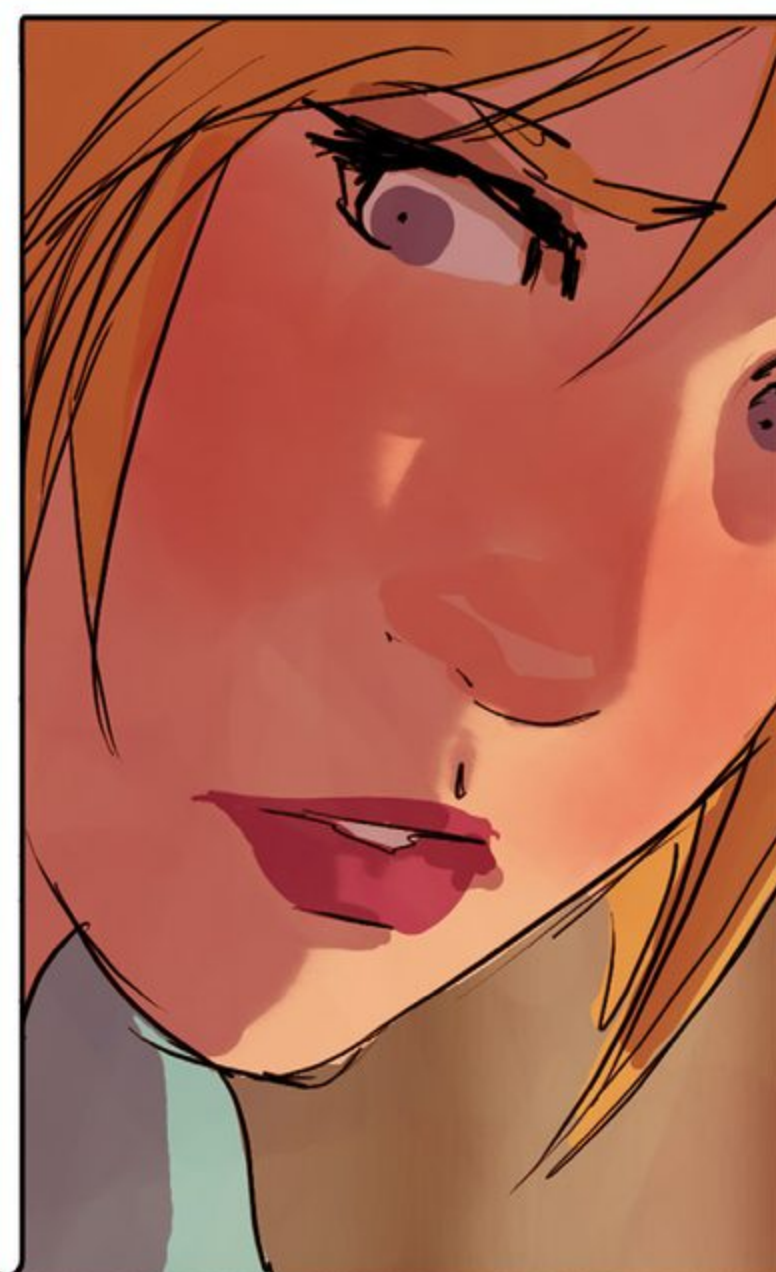
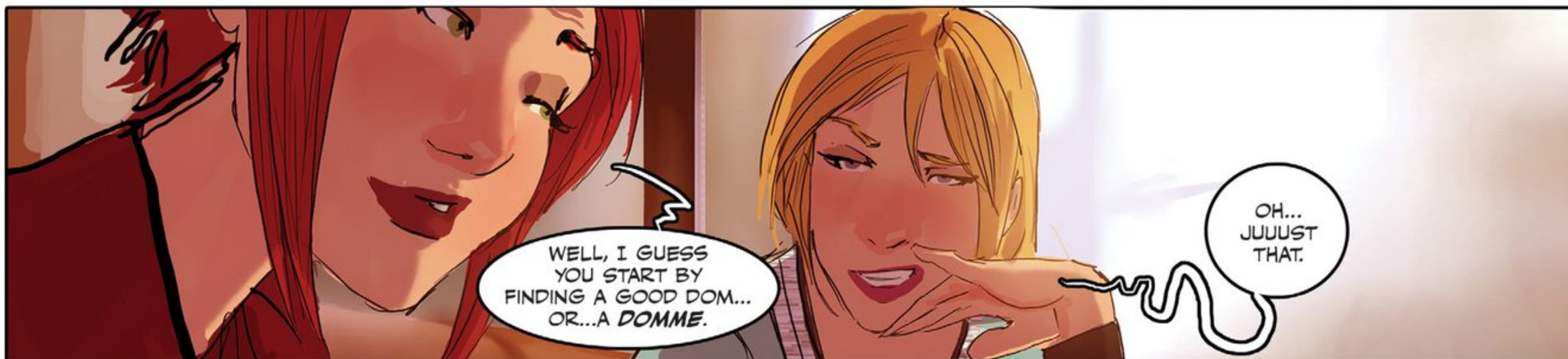




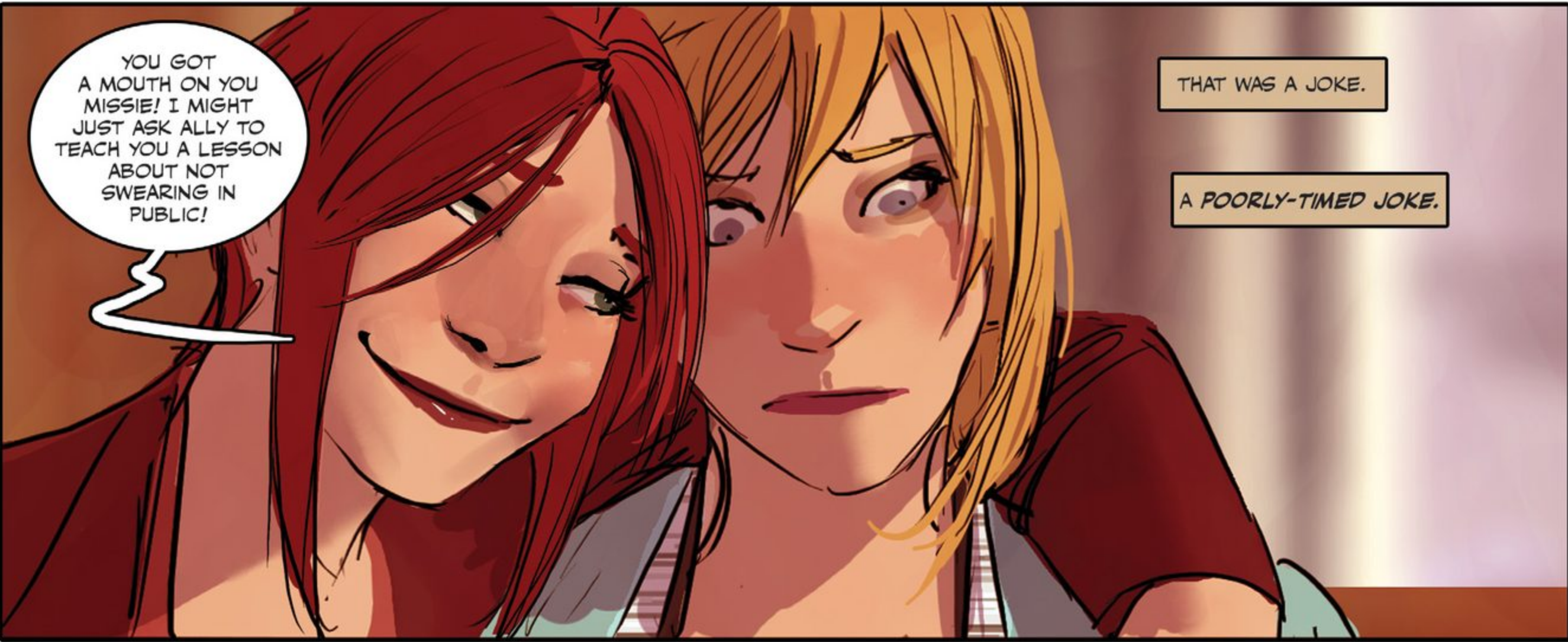








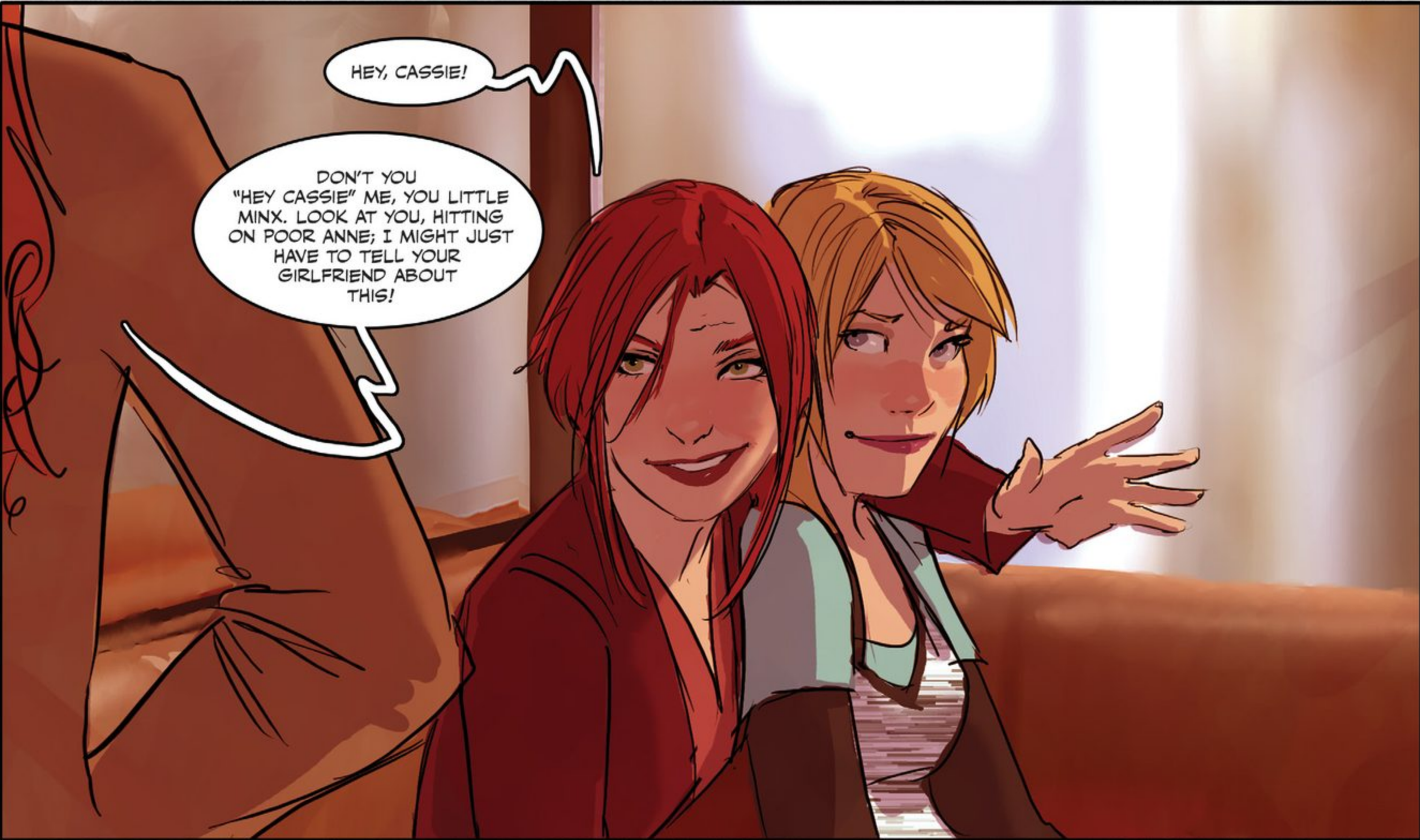




YOU GOT A MOUTH ON YOU MISSIE! I MIGHT JUST ASK ALLY TO TEACH YOU A LESSON ABOUT NOT SWEARING IN PUBLIC!

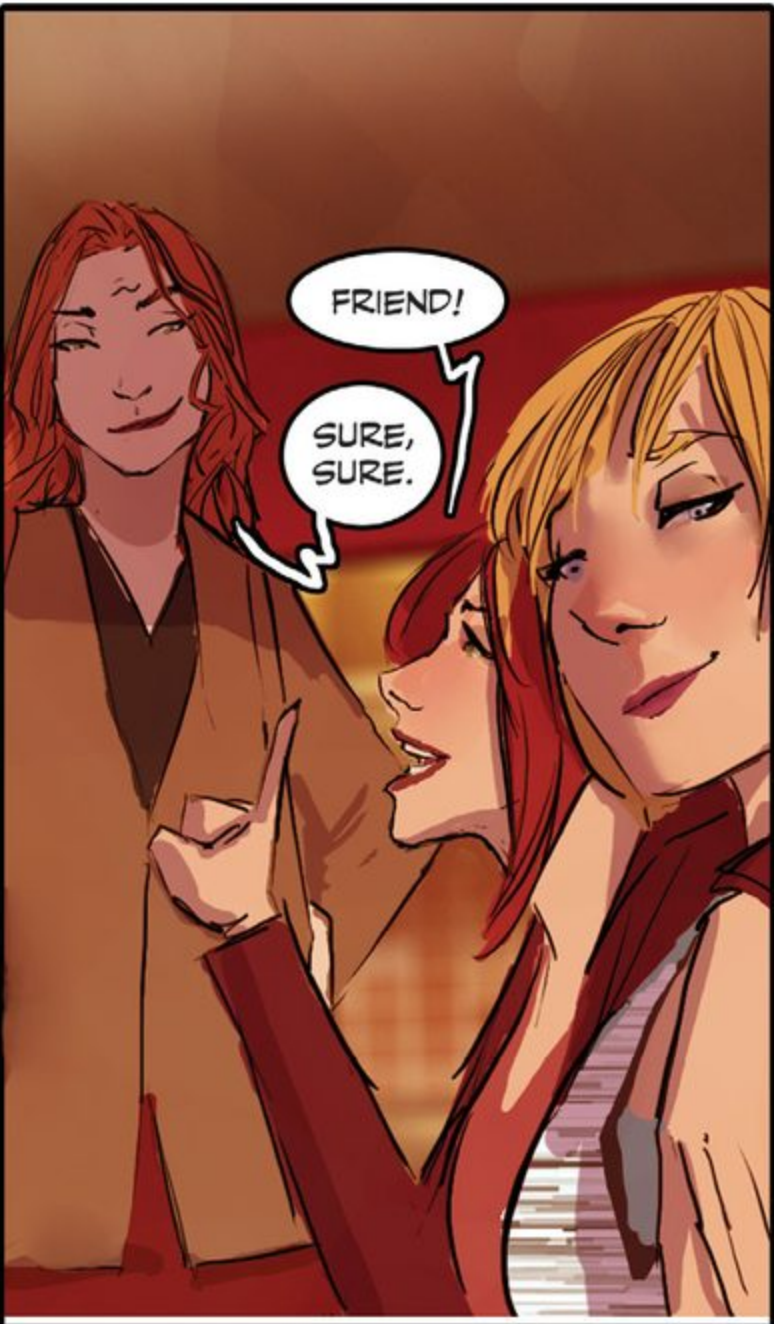
THAT WAS A JOKE.

A POORLY-TIMED JOKE.



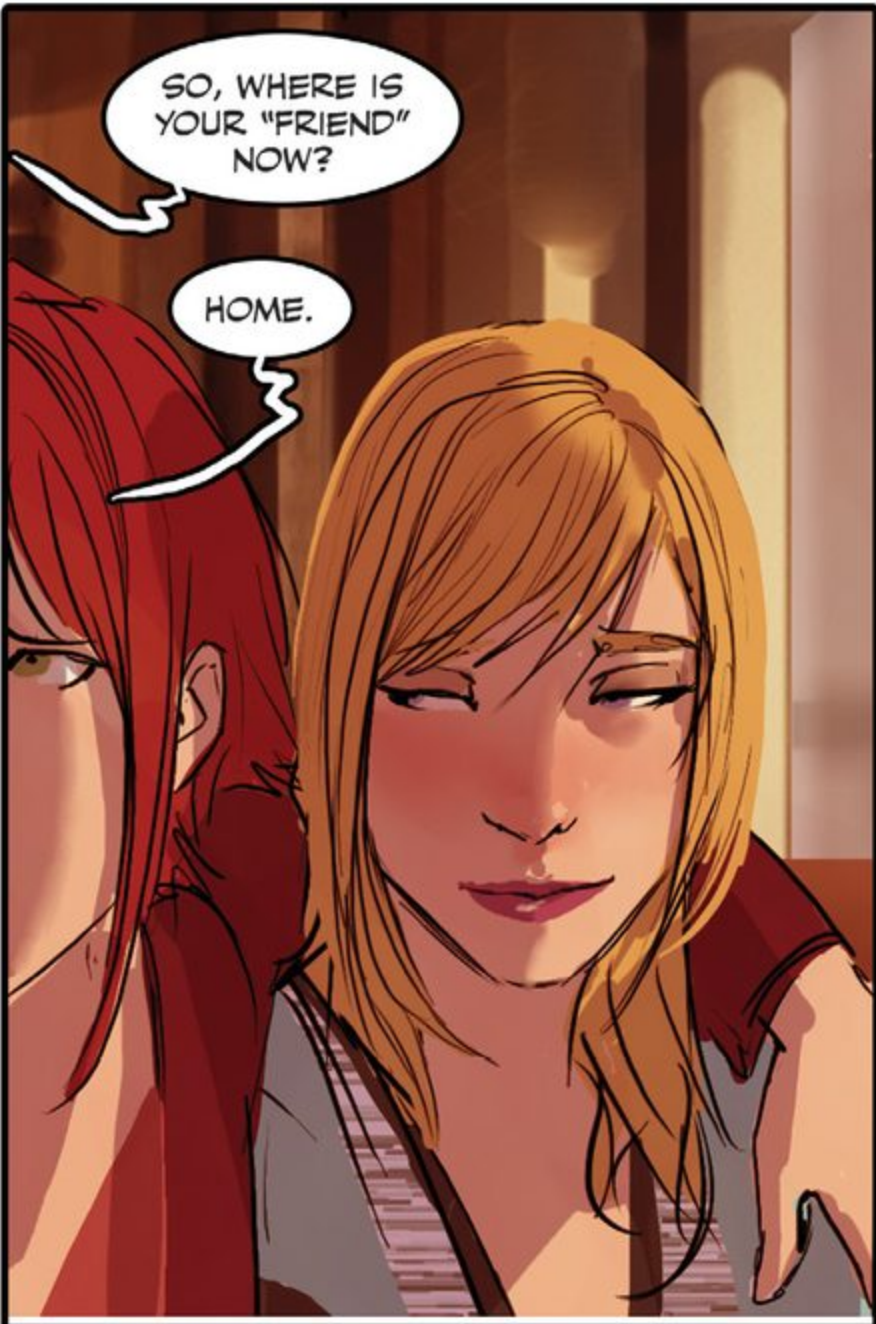
HEY, CASSIE!

DON'T YOU "HEY CASSIE" ME, YOU LITTLE MINX. LOOK AT YOU, HITTING ON POOR ANNE; I MIGHT JUST HAVE TO TELL YOUR GIRLFRIEND ABOUT THIS!



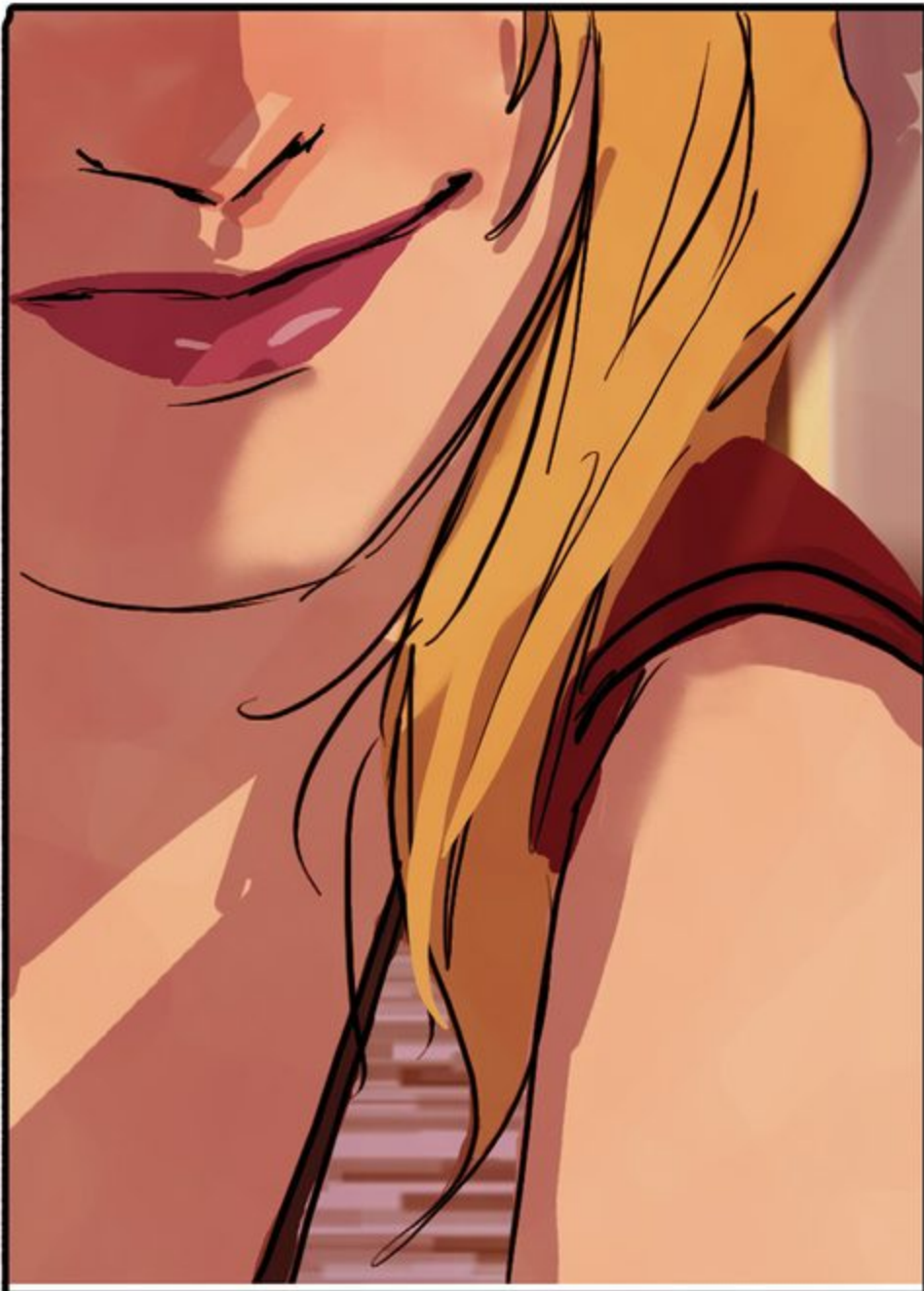
FRIEND!

SURE, SURE.

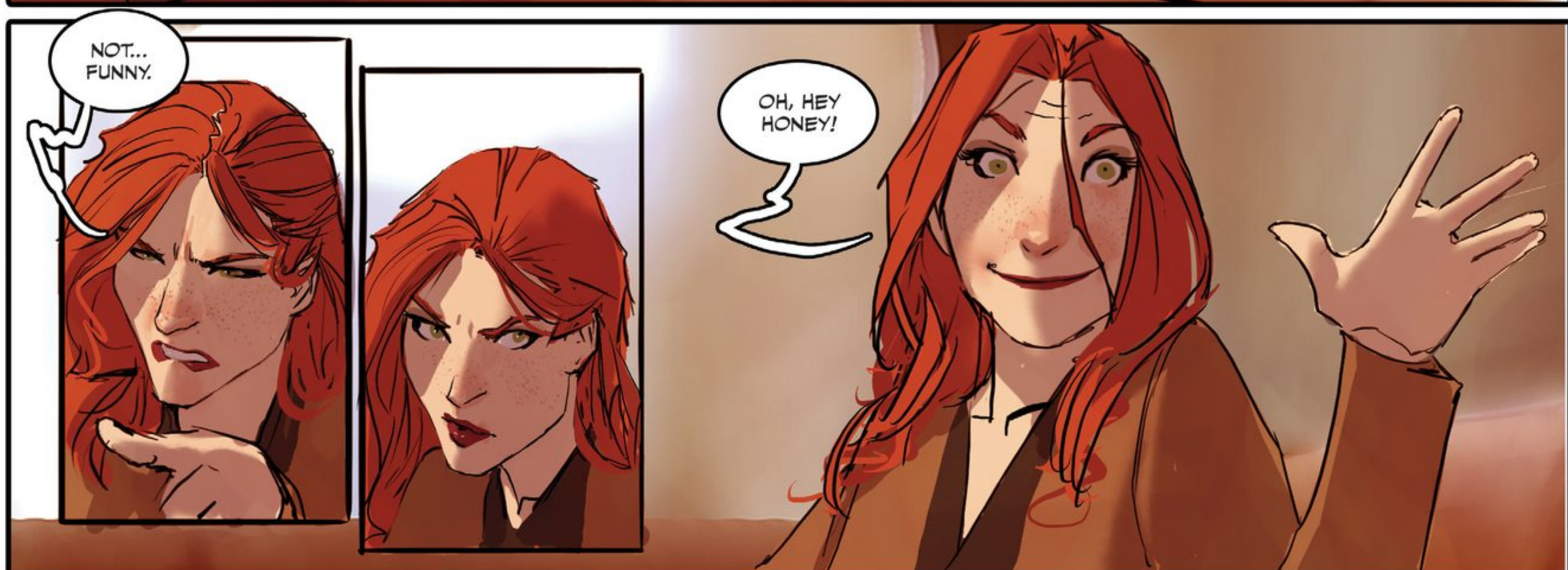
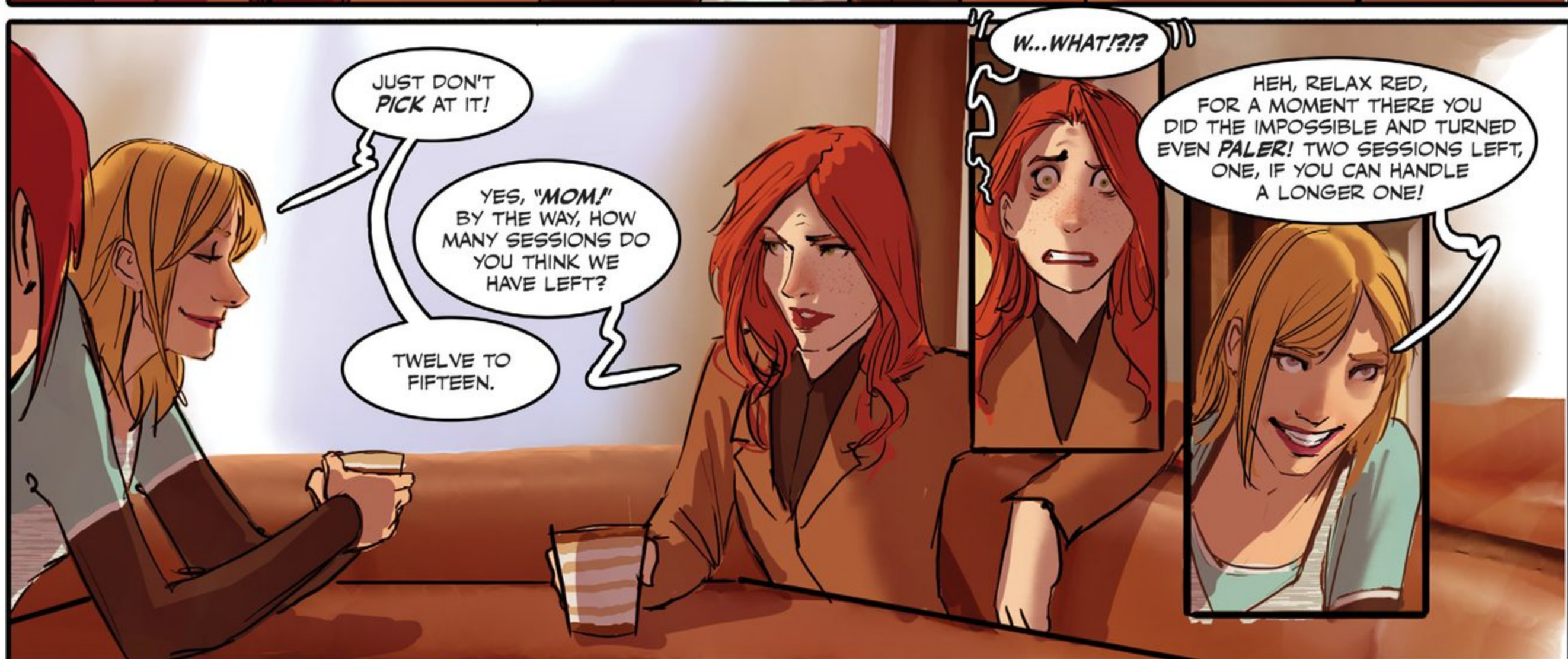
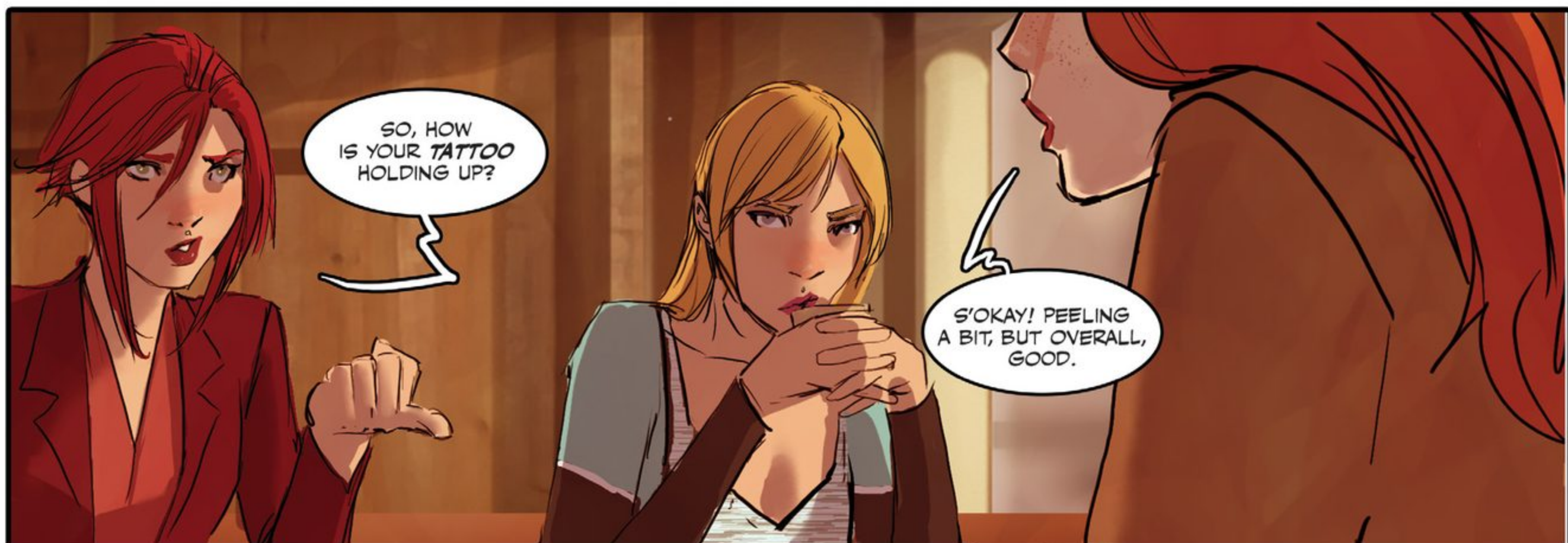


SO, WHERE IS YOUR "FRIEND" NOW?

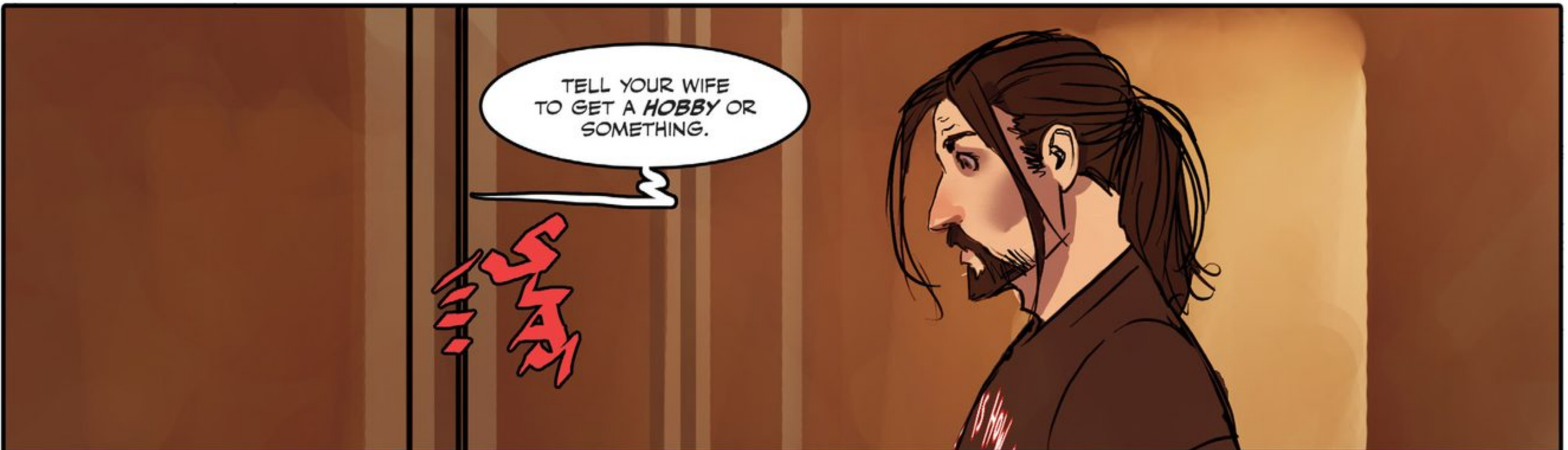
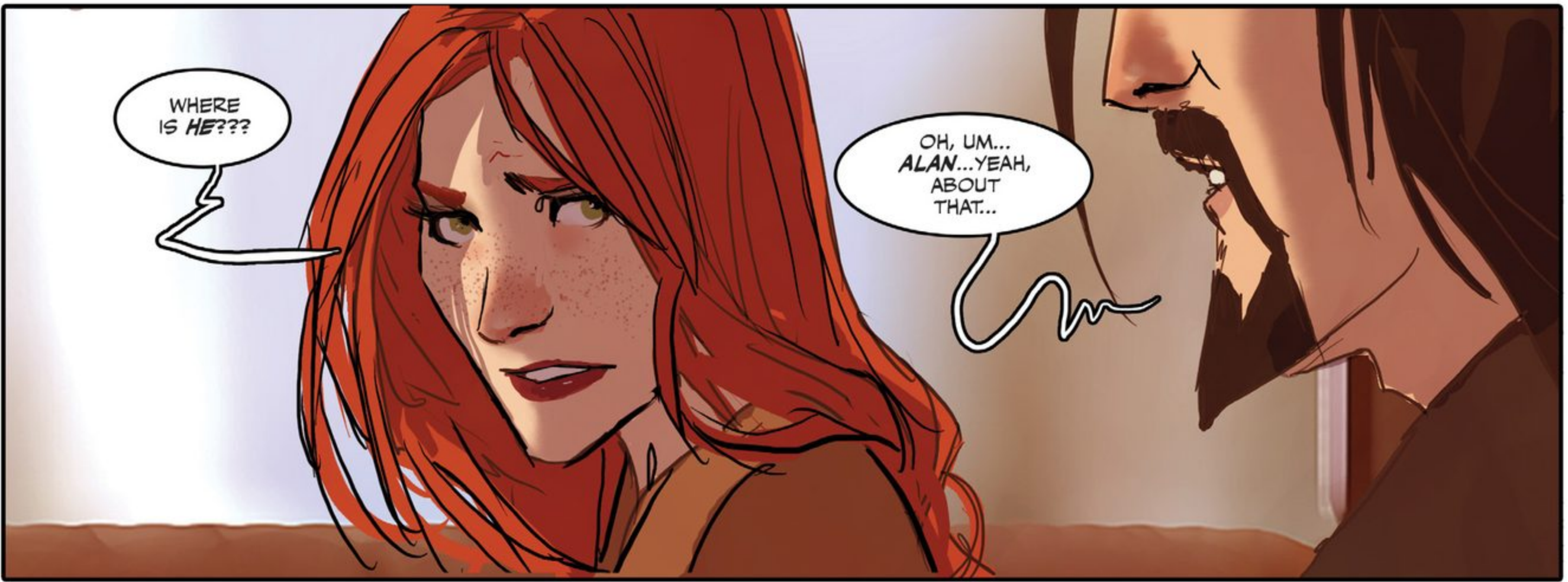
HOME.



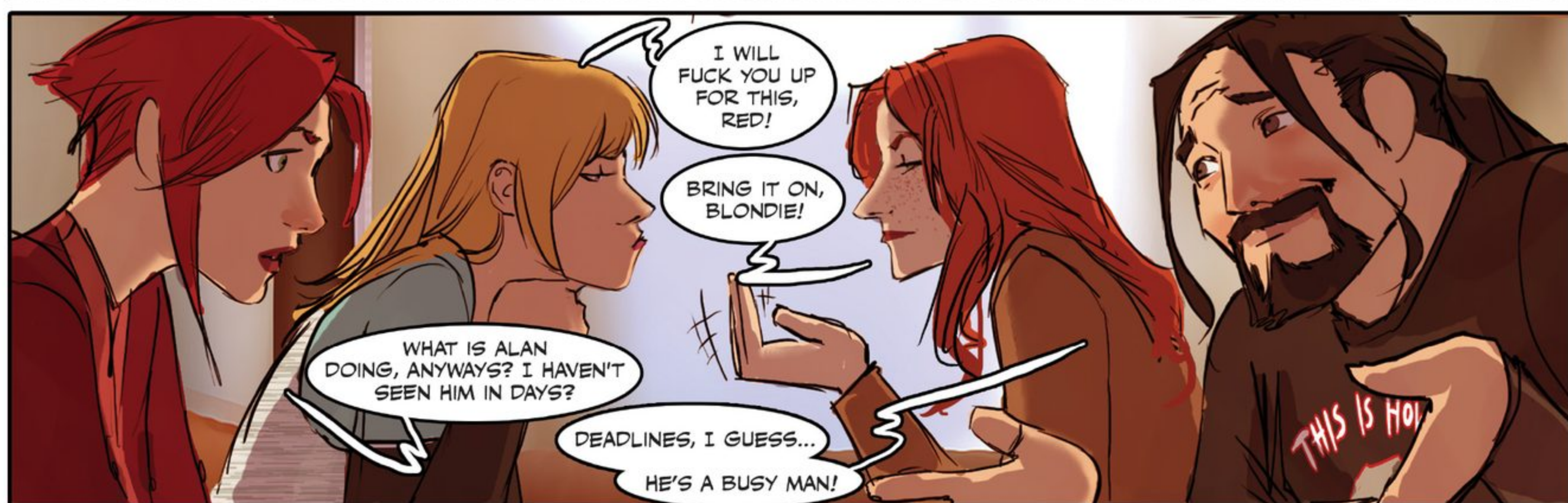




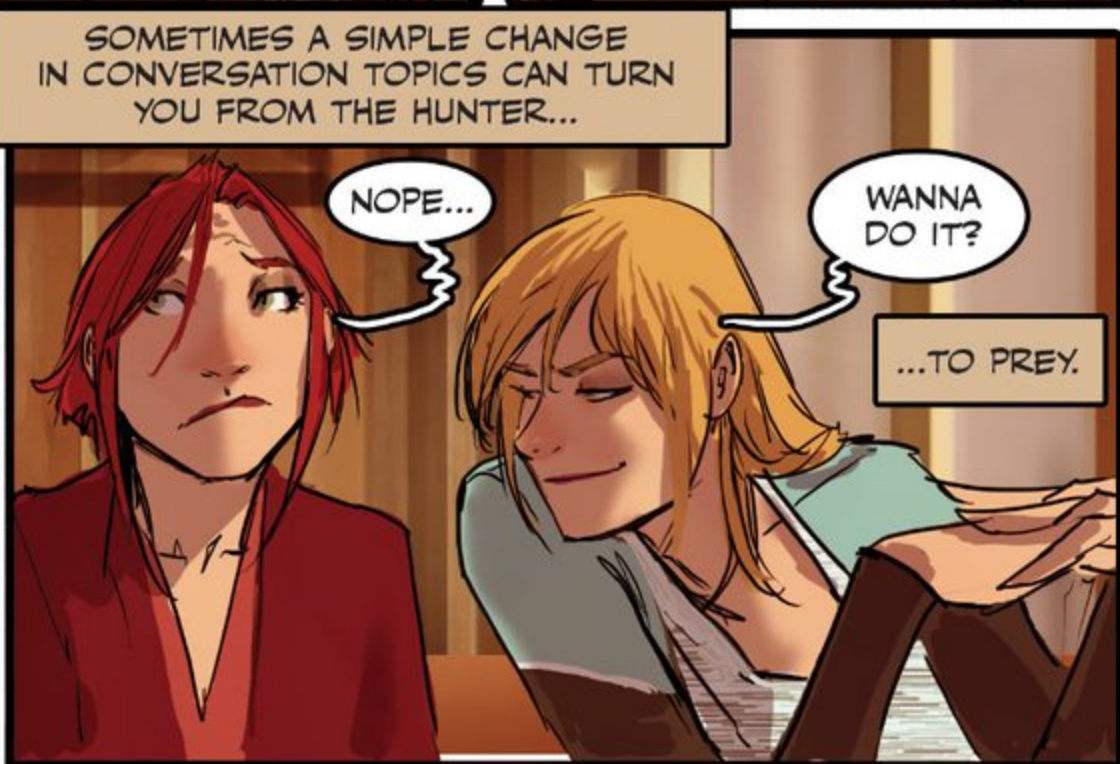
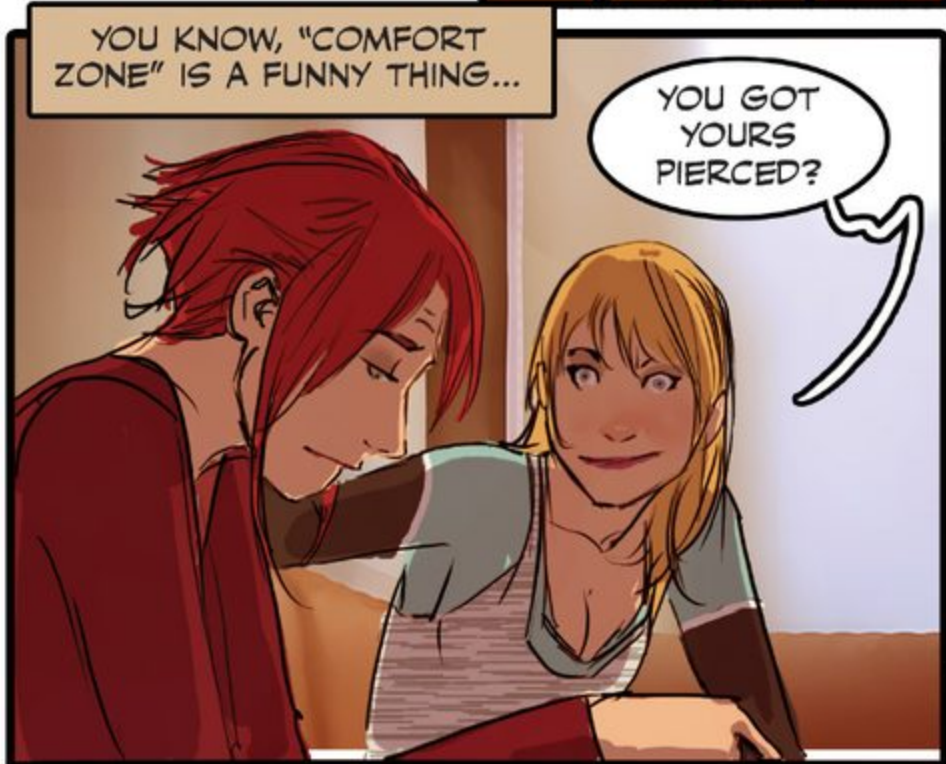
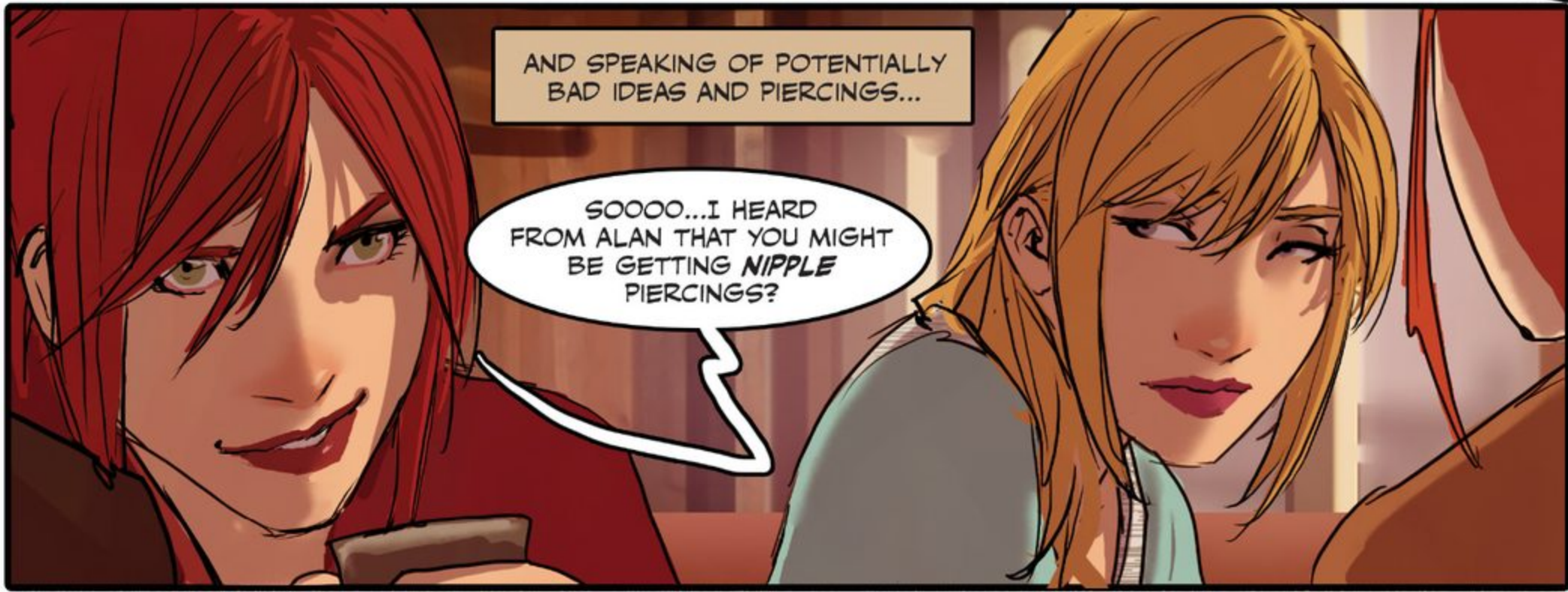




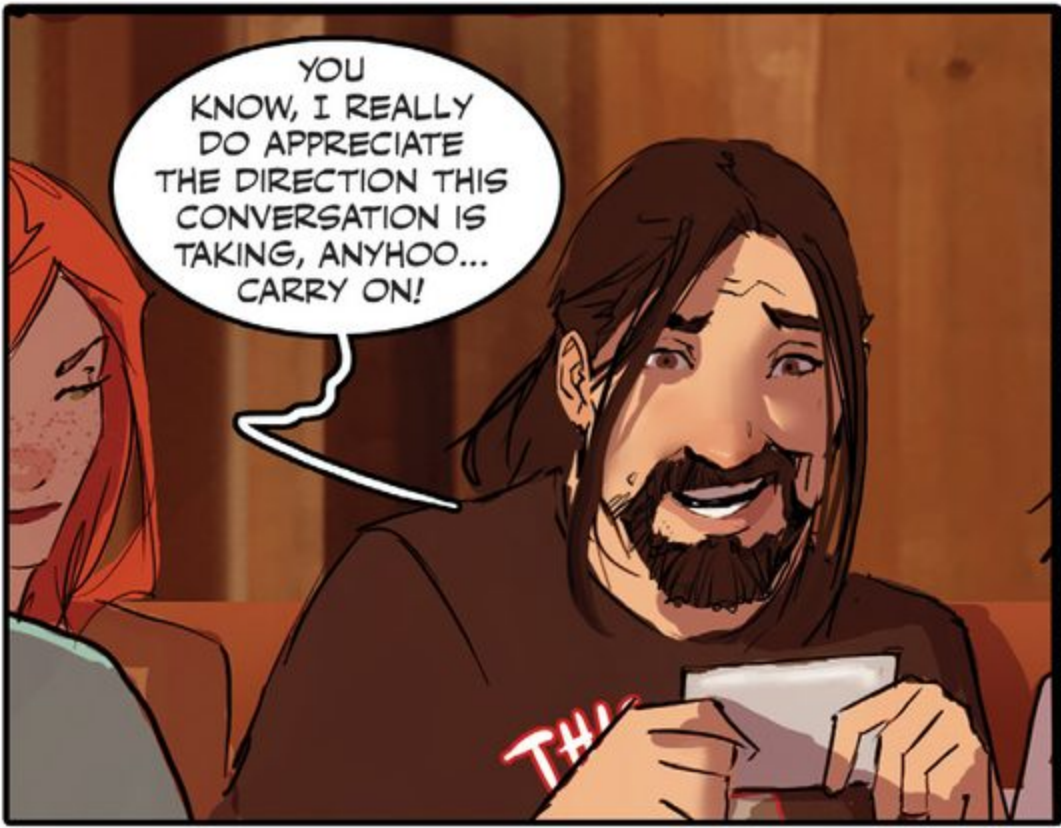




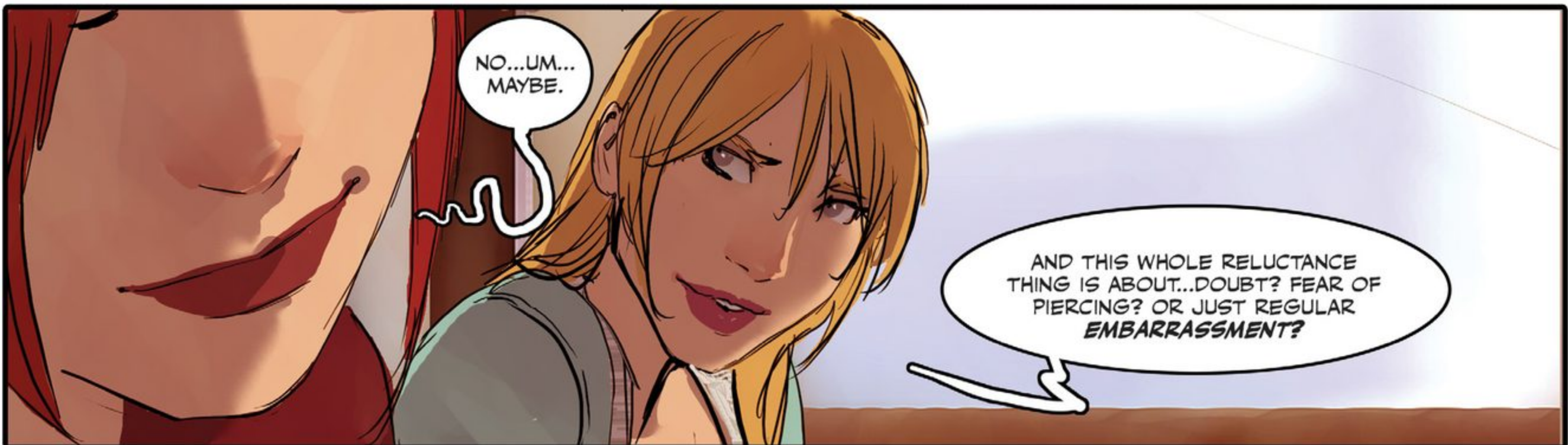
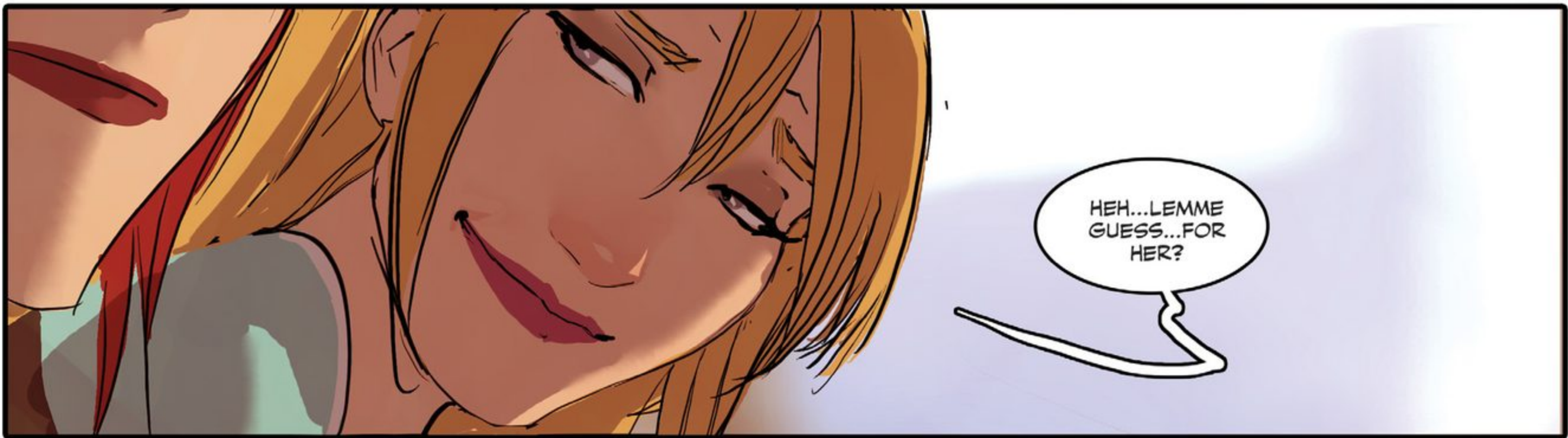




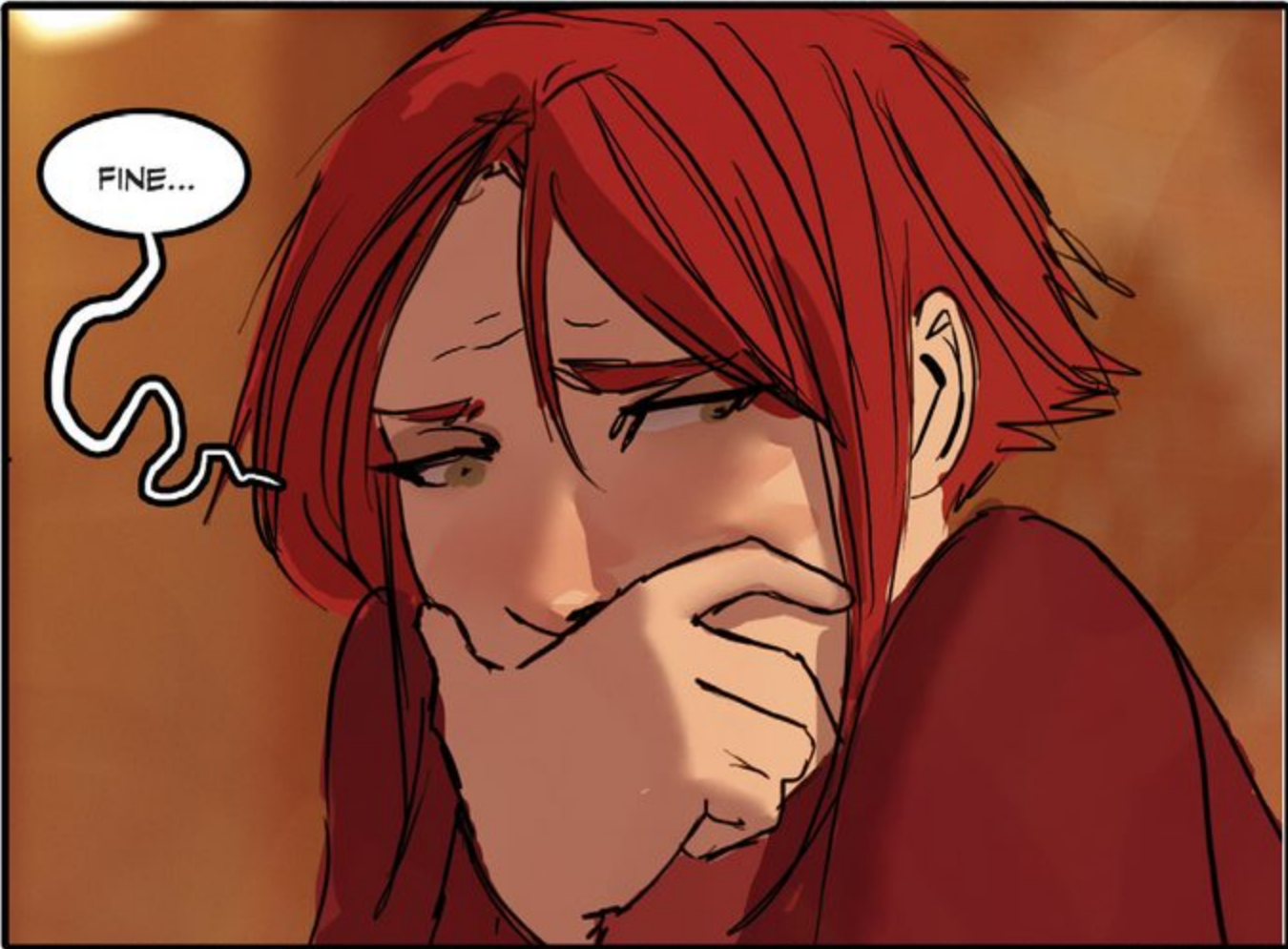
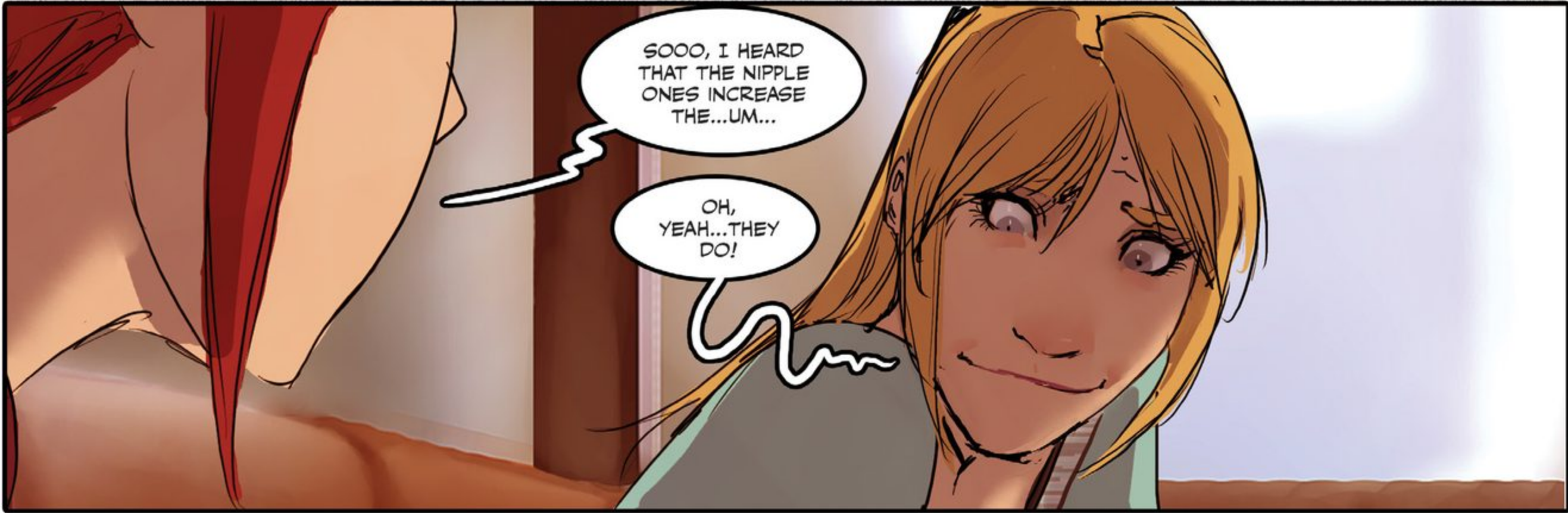














AND SPEAKING  
OF ESCAPISM...







DID WE  
GET IT??

WAIT FOR IT!

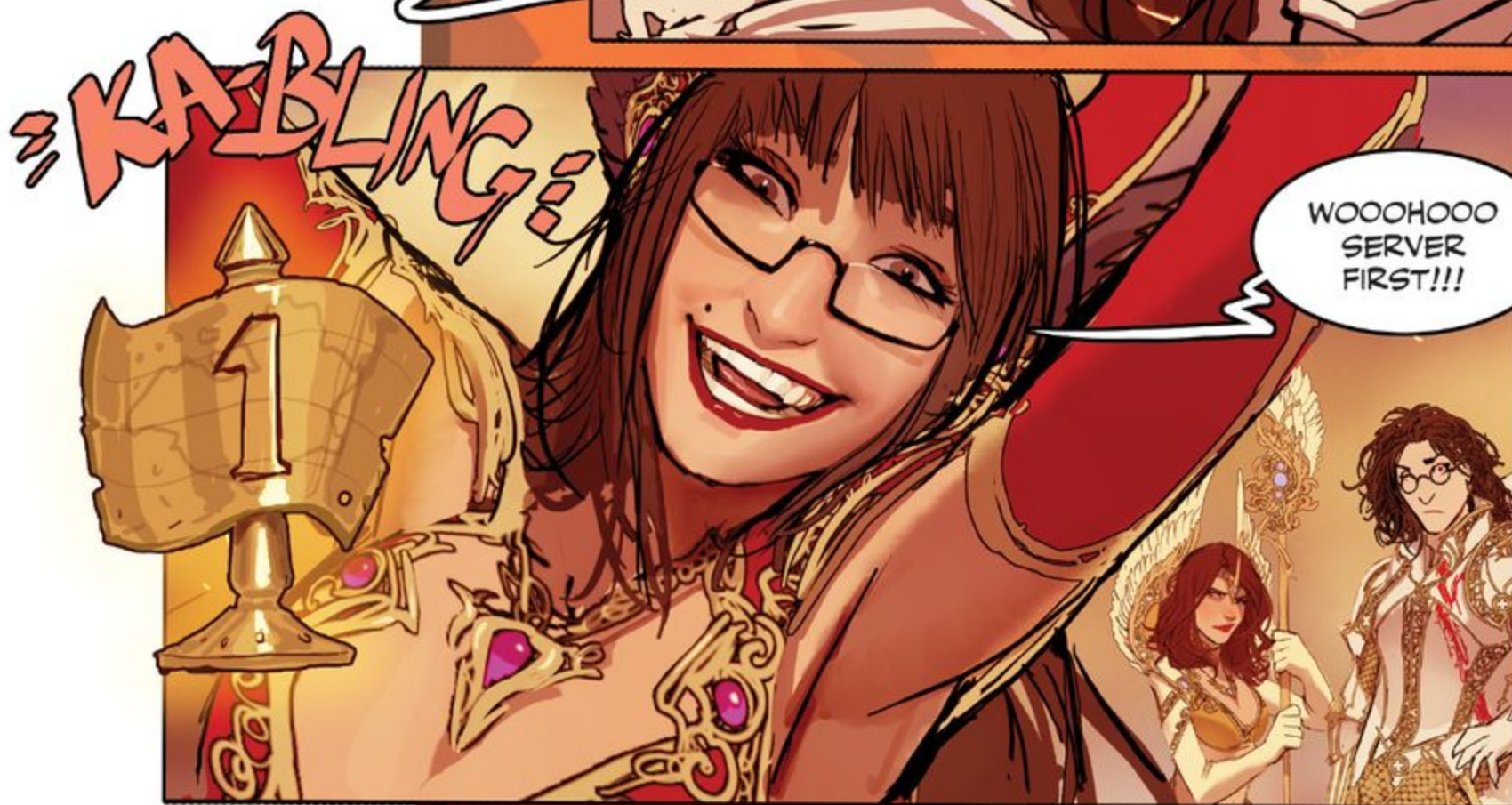
JUST...  
BE READY.



FOR CRYING  
OUT LOUD! THERE CAN'T  
BE ANY MORE PHASES,  
I LITERALLY HAVE ZERO  
MANA POTIONS  
LEFT!



SO, HOW LONG  
'TIL WE KNOW?



WOOOHOOO  
SERVER  
FIRST!!!

AHEM...THIS  
APPARENTLY MATTERS...  
FOR *SOME* REASON.



WOHHOOOOO!

SOOOO...  
SHE DOES THIS  
OFTEN, HUH?

SHE'S BEEN  
AFTER ANY SERVER-  
FIRST ACHIEVEMENT  
FOR OVER A YEAR  
NOW, VLAD.

LET HER  
HAVE THIS.

AAAAWWW  
YEEAAHHH!!!

ANYHOO...ALLY'S FAVORITE FORM  
OF ESCAPISM WAS SOME ONLINE GAME.

DON'T ASK ME WHICH! THEY  
ALL LOOKED THE SAME TO ME.





VIDEOGAMES MAY NOT BE MY THING,  
BUT I CERTAINLY UNDERSTOOD  
THE WAY THEY CONNECTED PEOPLE.



**ARCANE DRAGON  
OF MAGIC**

**THIS PET WILL DRASTICALLY  
BOOST MAGE'S ELEMENTAL  
DAMAGE. OTHER CLASSES GAIN  
BOOST IN MAGIC RESISTANCE**

SURE, IT WAS  
DIFFERENT FROM  
*MY* PREFERRED  
FORM OF  
ENTERTAINMENT...

BY THAT, I MEAN  
*BOOKS*...NOT THE  
*SEX* STUFF...



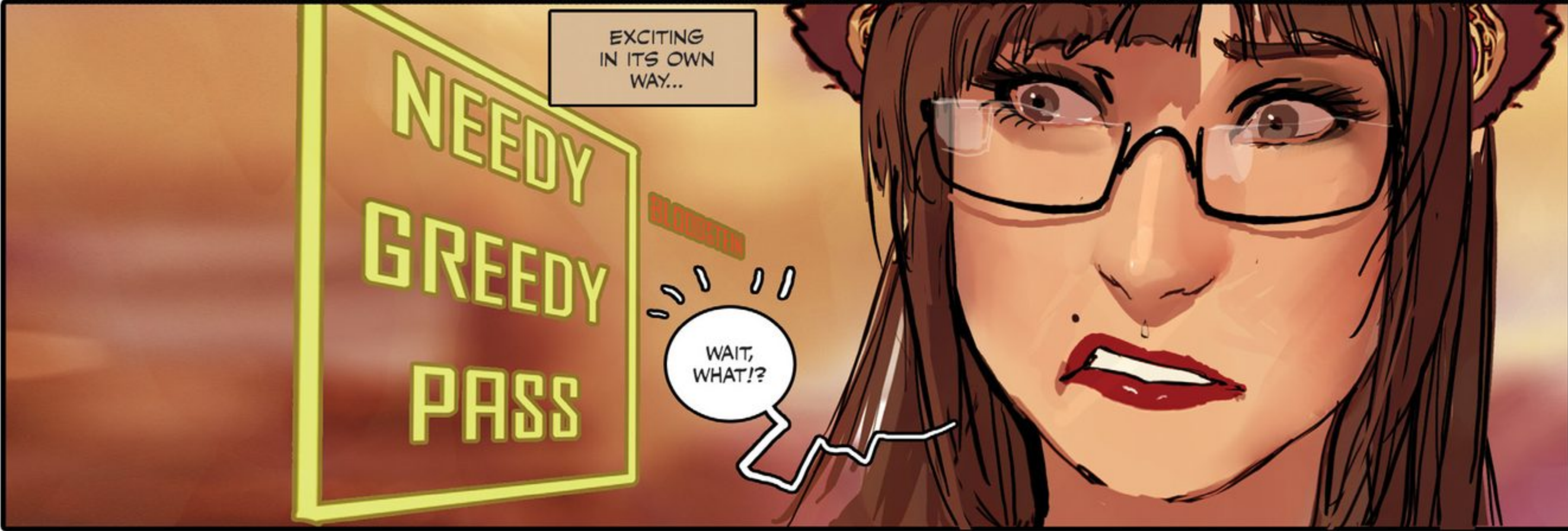
ANYHOW...MY POINT  
IS, I GOT ITS APPEAL.

MEH...  
MIGHT AS WELL.



GAMING WAS  
INTERACTIVE...

**NEEDY  
GREEDY  
PASS**

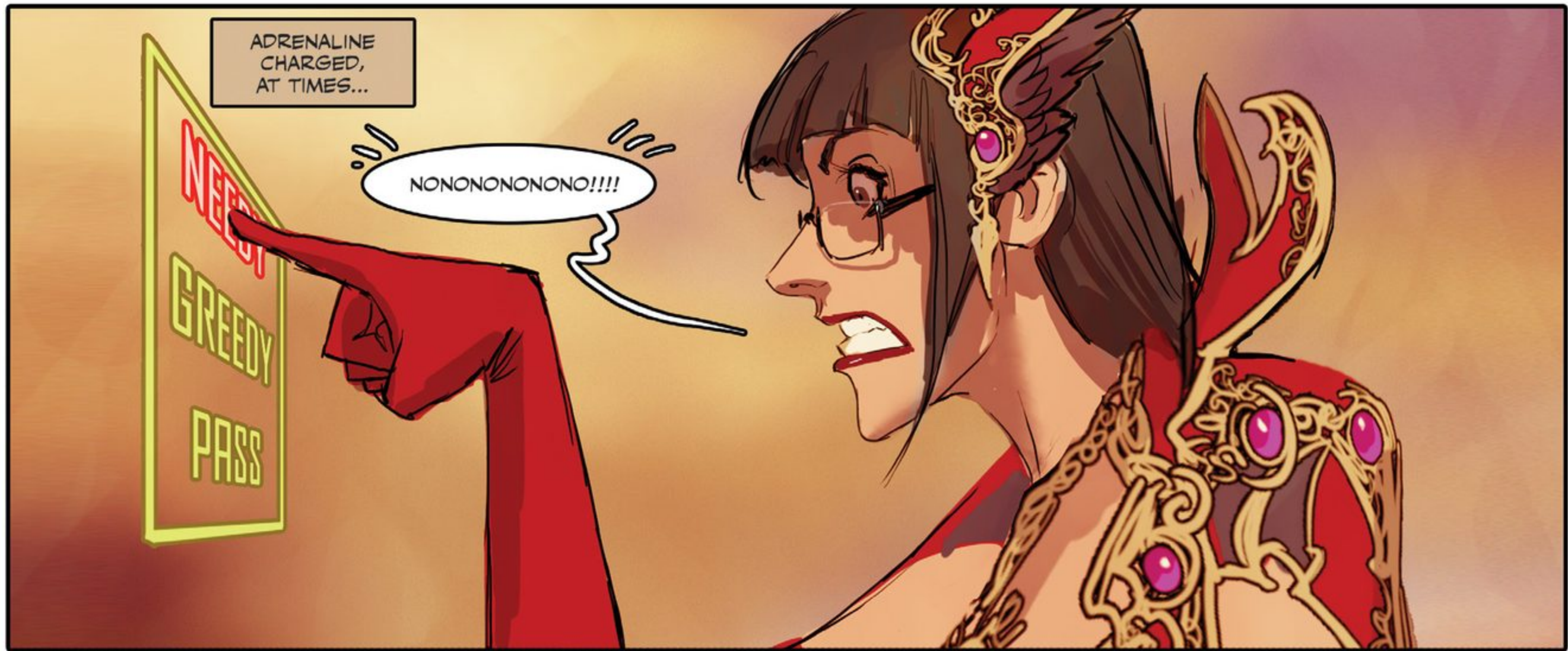


EXCITING  
IN ITS OWN  
WAY...

**ALERT**

WAIT,  
WHAT!?





ADRENALINE  
CHARGED,  
AT TIMES...

NONONONONONO!!!!

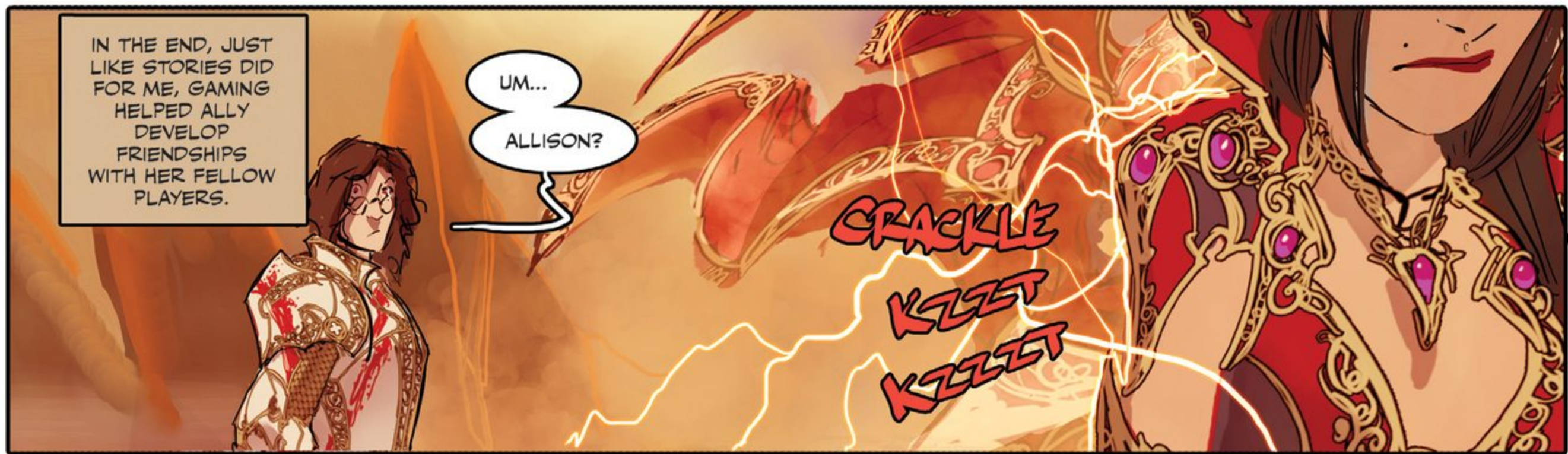
NEEDY  
GREEDY  
PASS



HEY, I GOT  
A PET!

AND IN THE AGE  
OF INTERNET, GAMES  
EVOLVED.

ALLY PLAYED  
WITH PEOPLE  
FROM ALL OVER  
THE WORLD.



IN THE END, JUST  
LIKE STORIES DID  
FOR ME, GAMING  
HELPED ALLY  
DEVELOP  
FRIENDSHIPS  
WITH HER FELLOW  
PLAYERS.

UM...  
ALLISON?

CRACKLE  
KZZET  
KZZET



YOU STUPID...

NO GOOD...

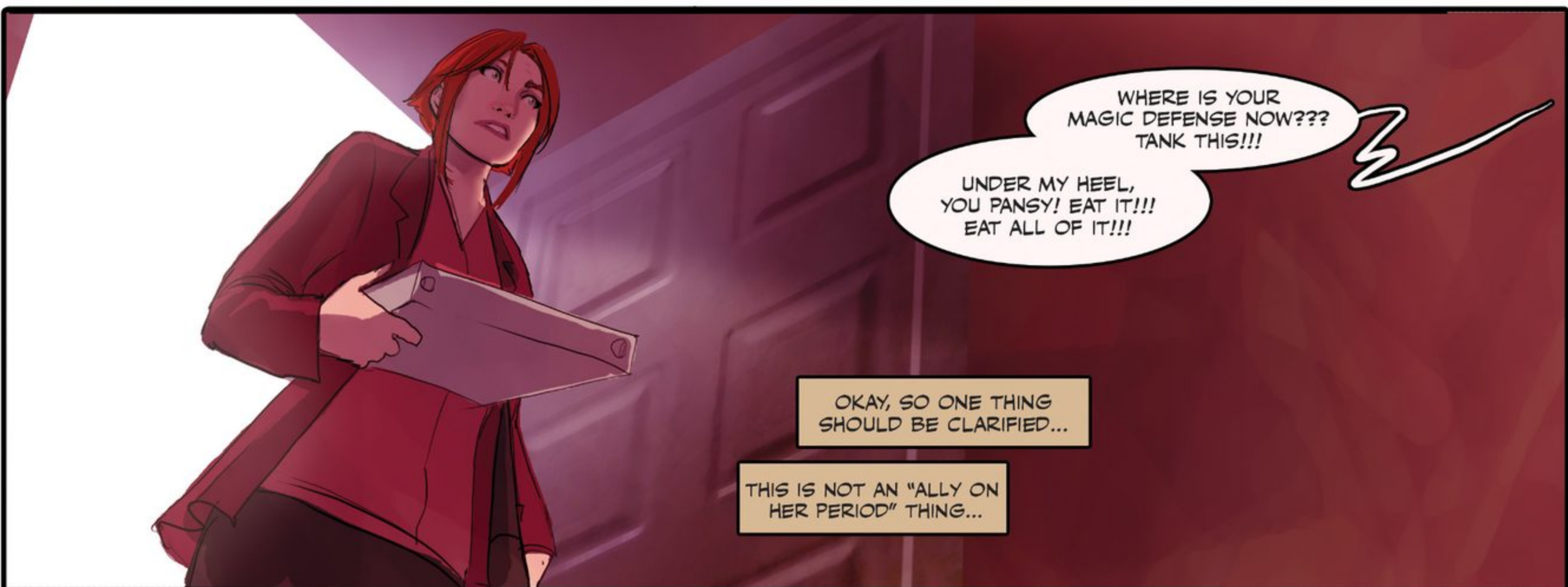
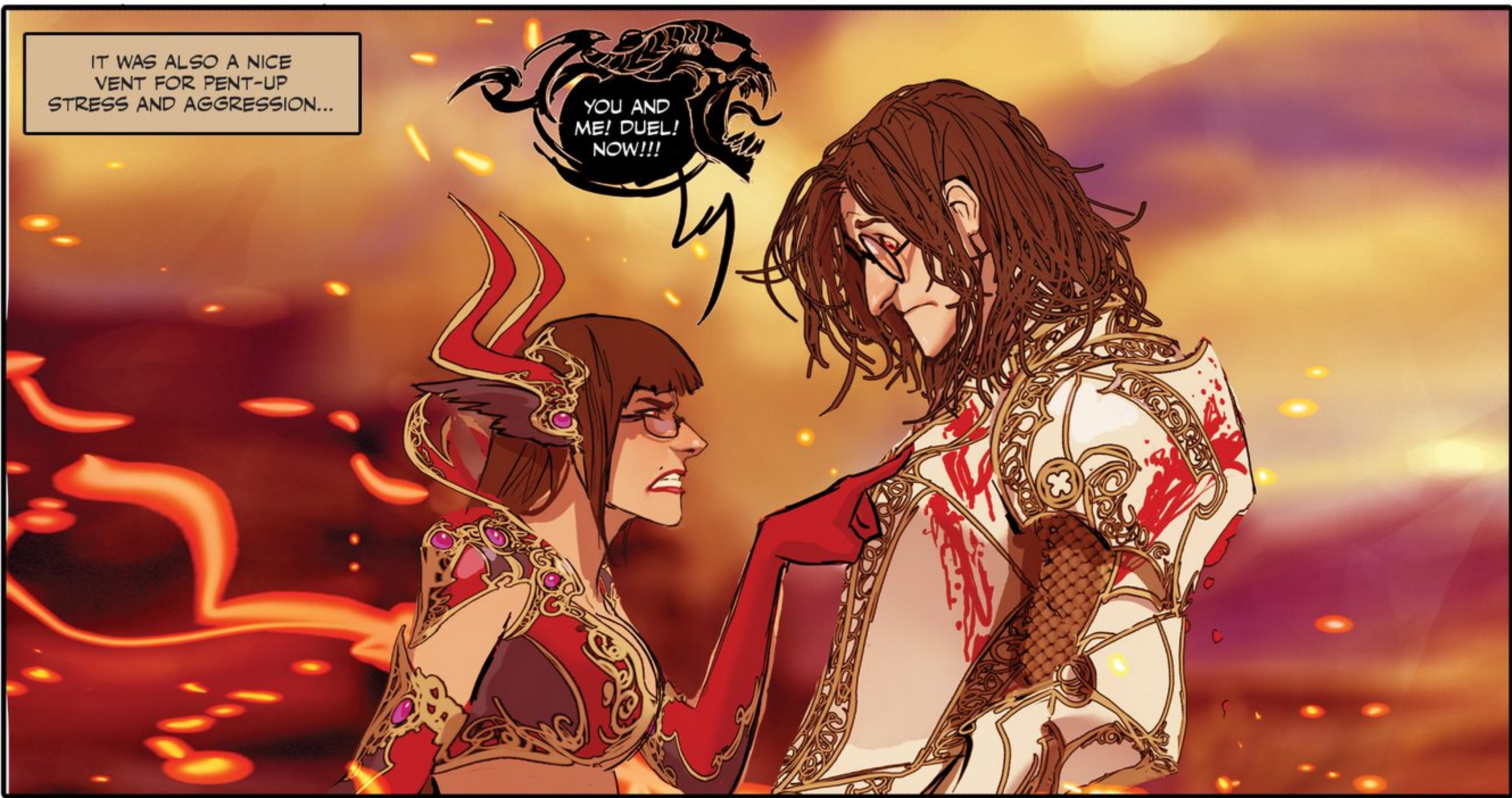
CASHOARING...

IT WAS A DEEP  
SENSE OF CAMARADERIE  
BASED ON MUTUAL RESPE...

WELL...

Awoooooon

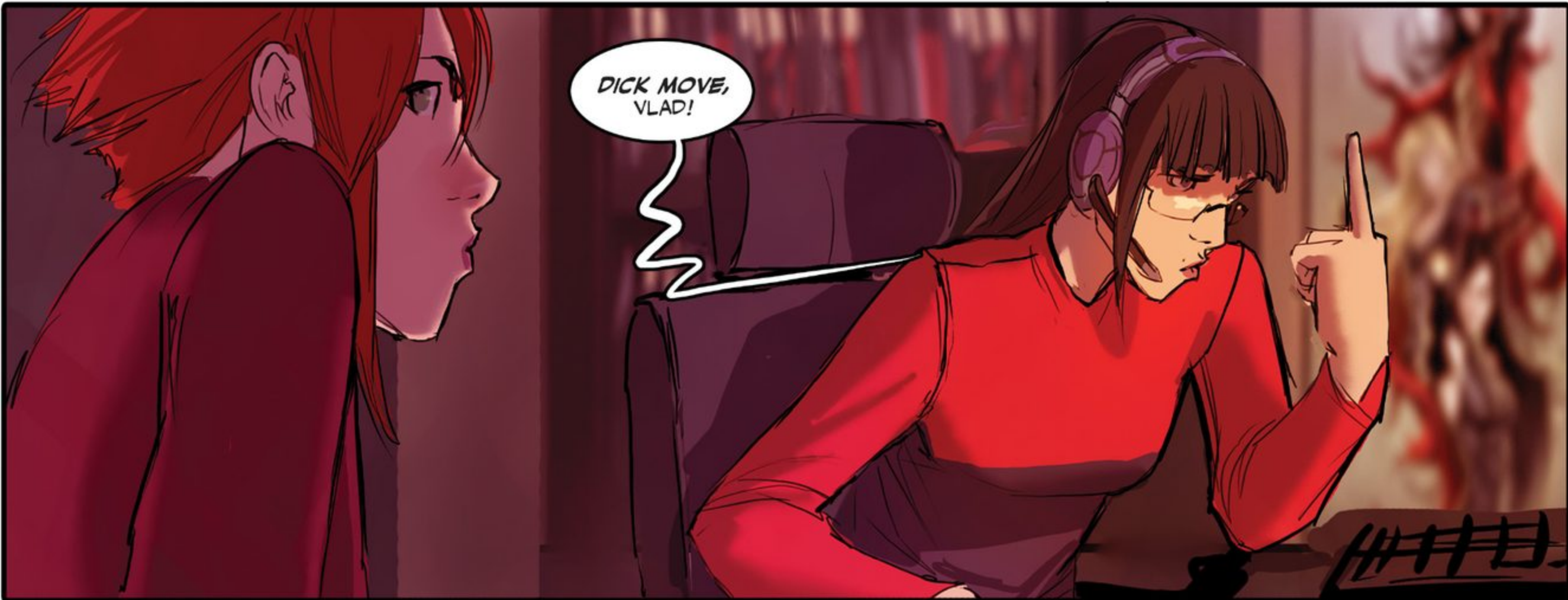




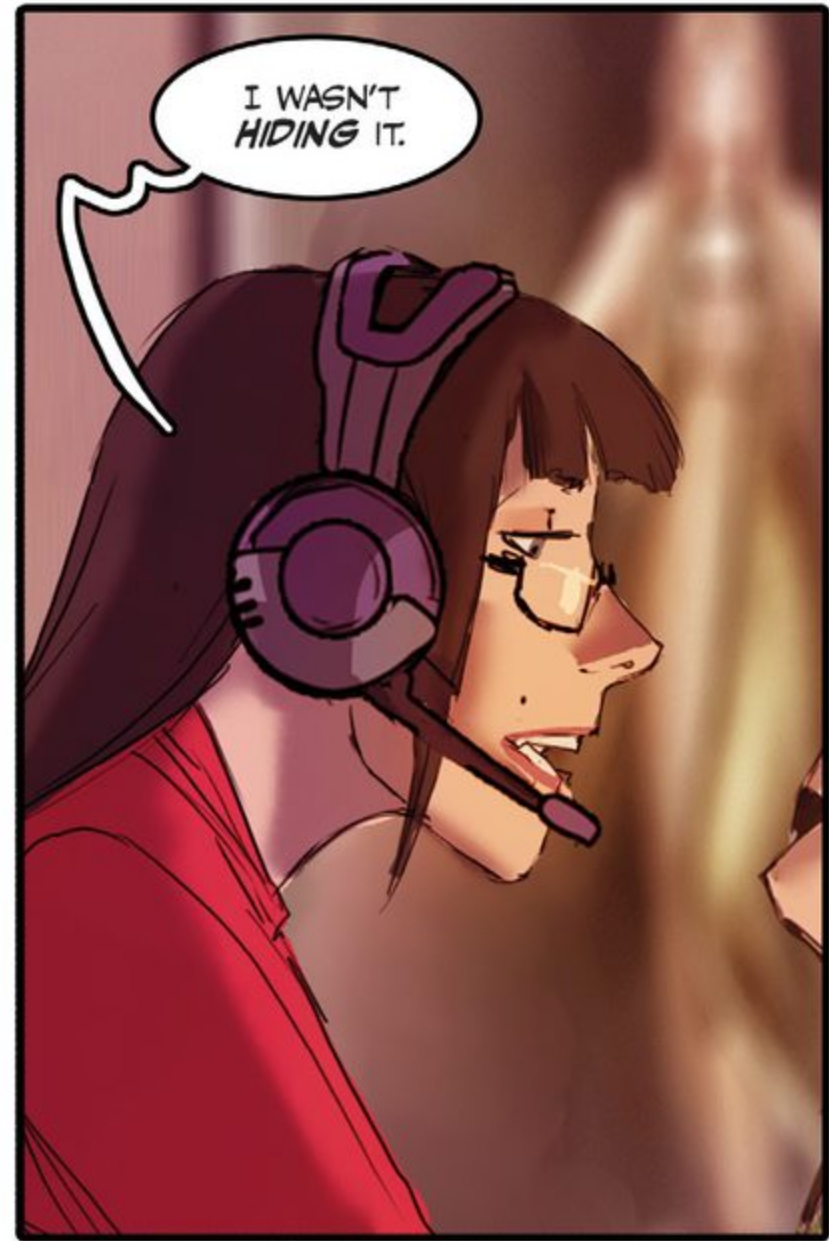
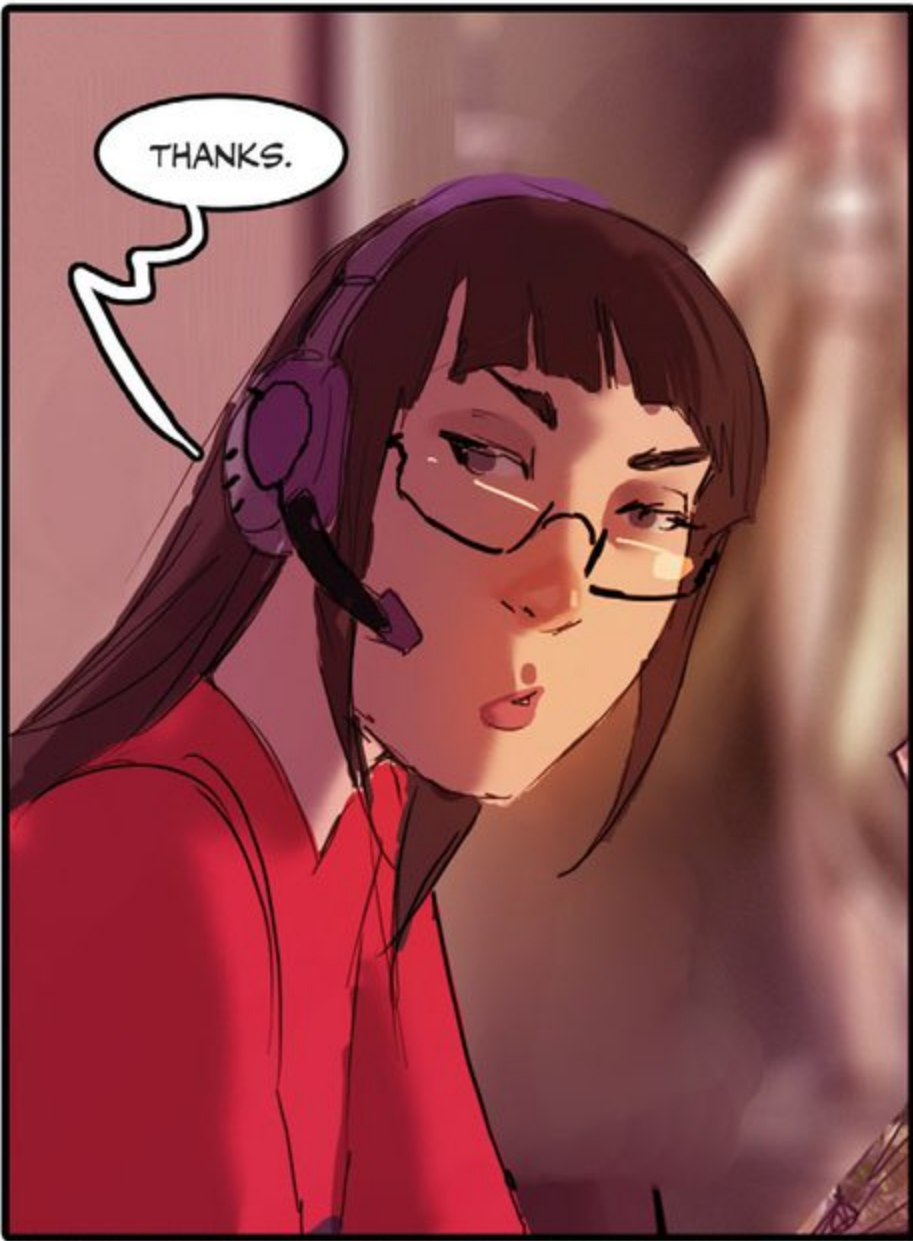




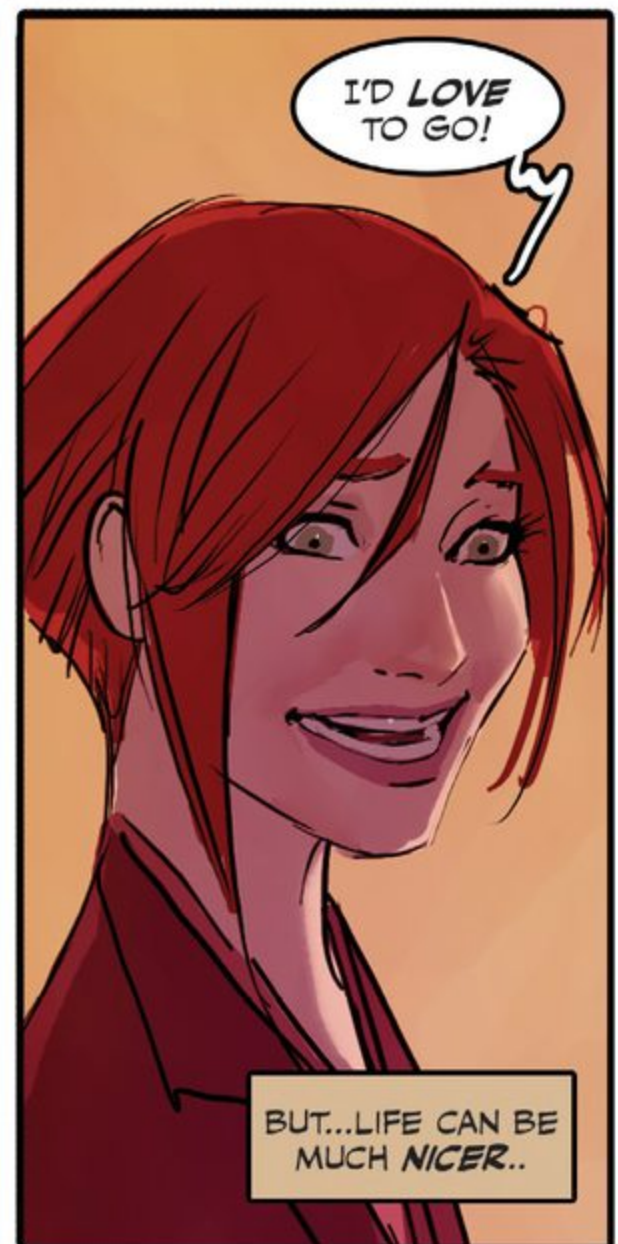
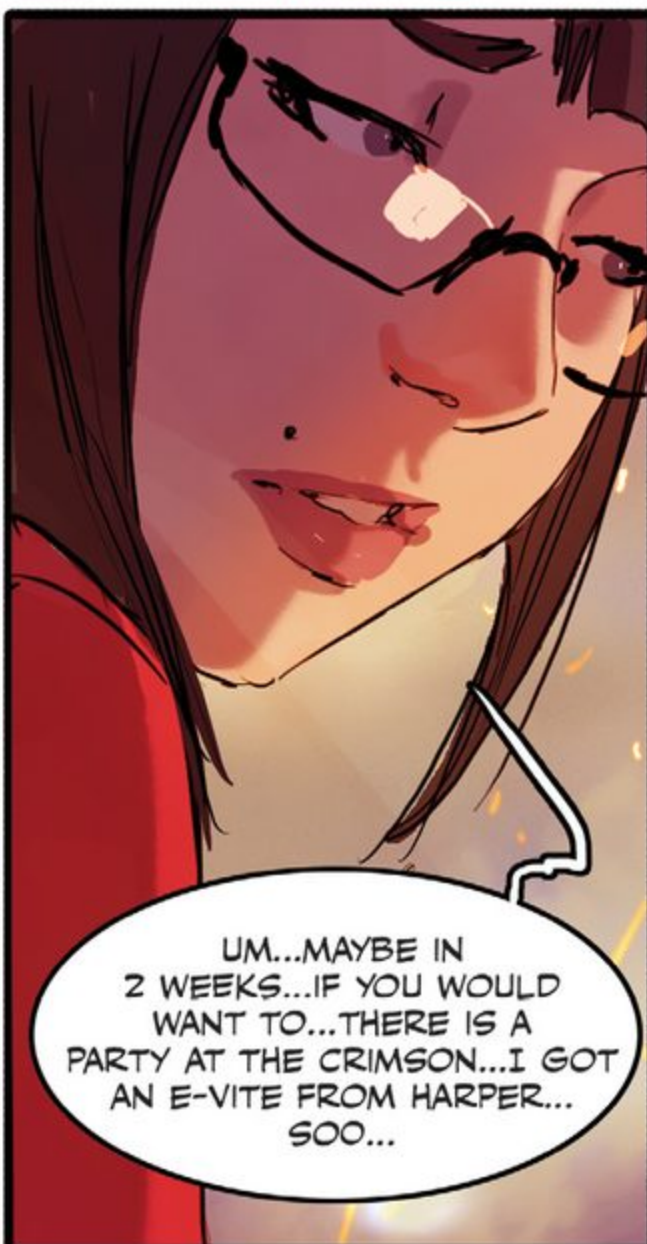
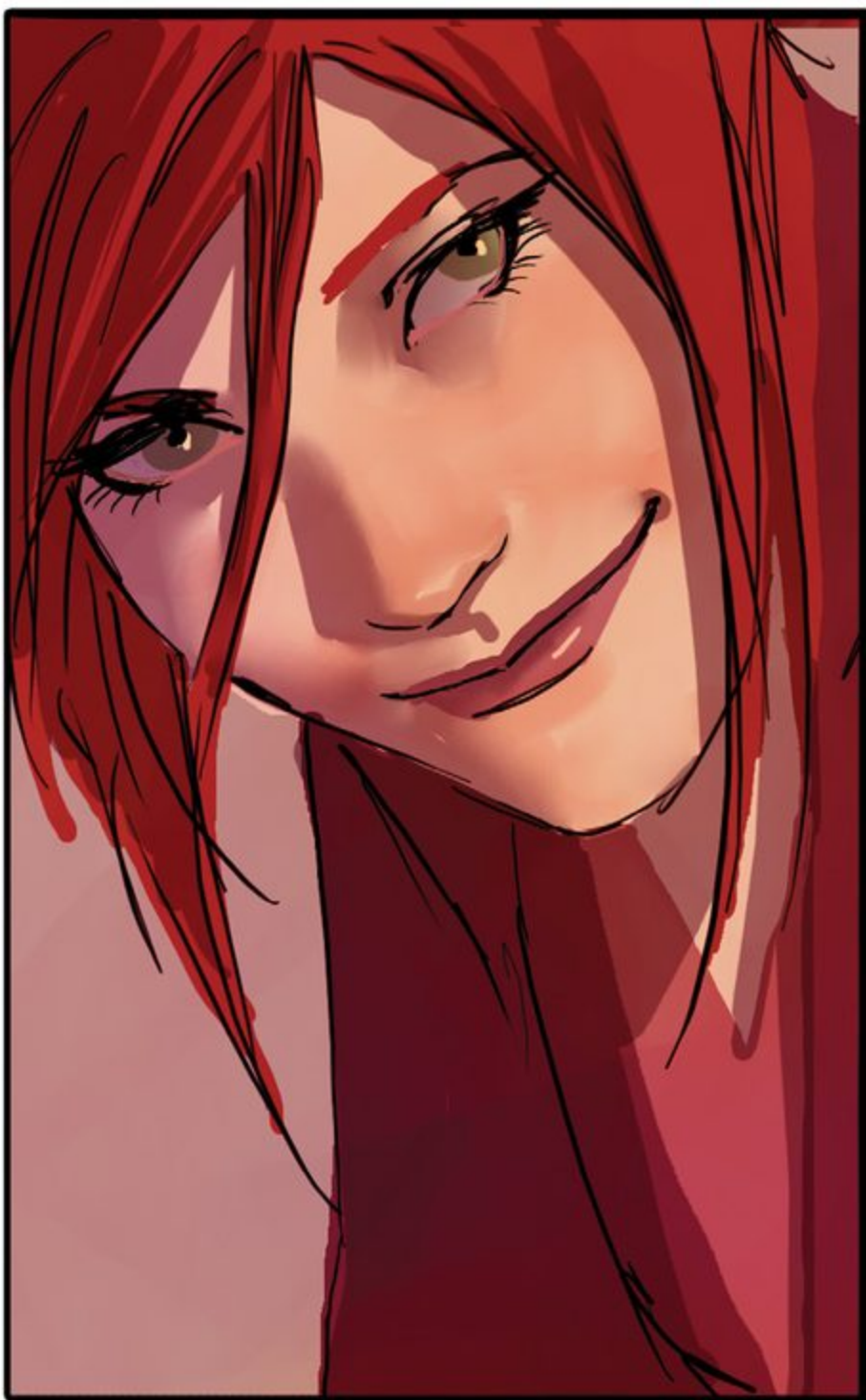










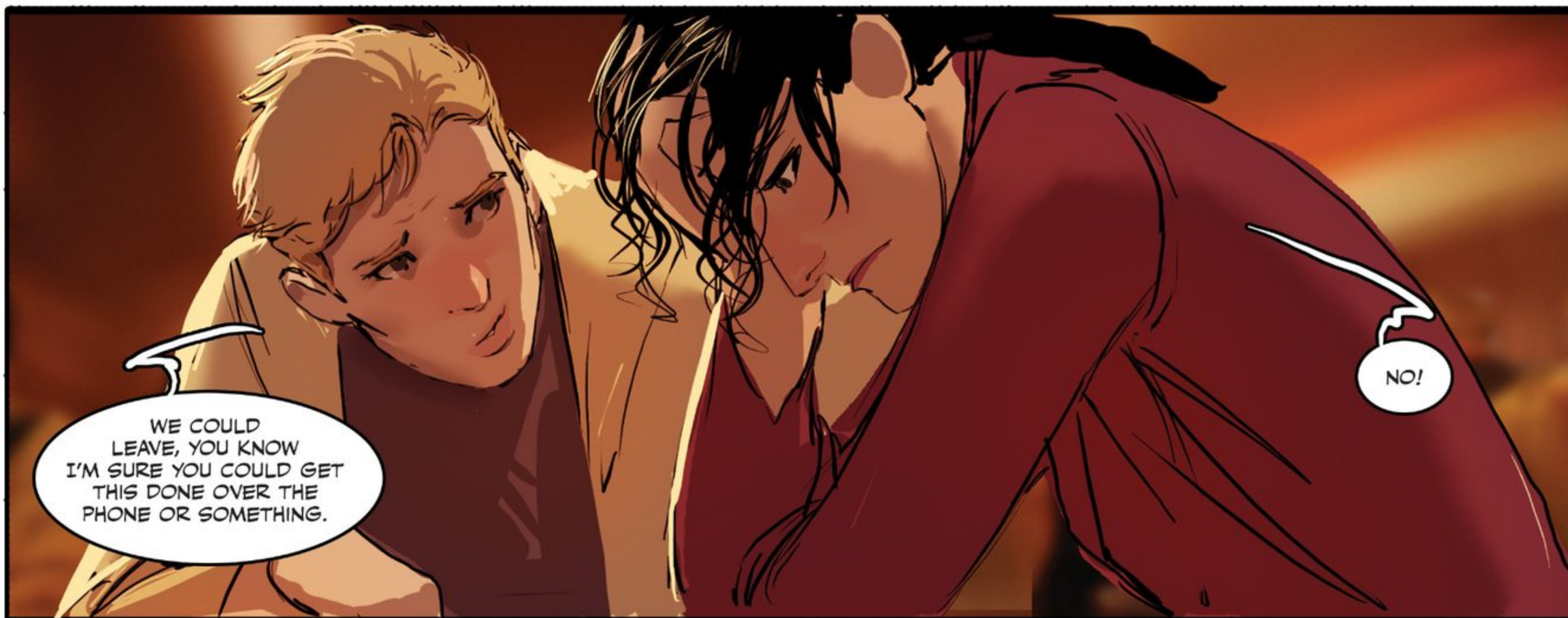




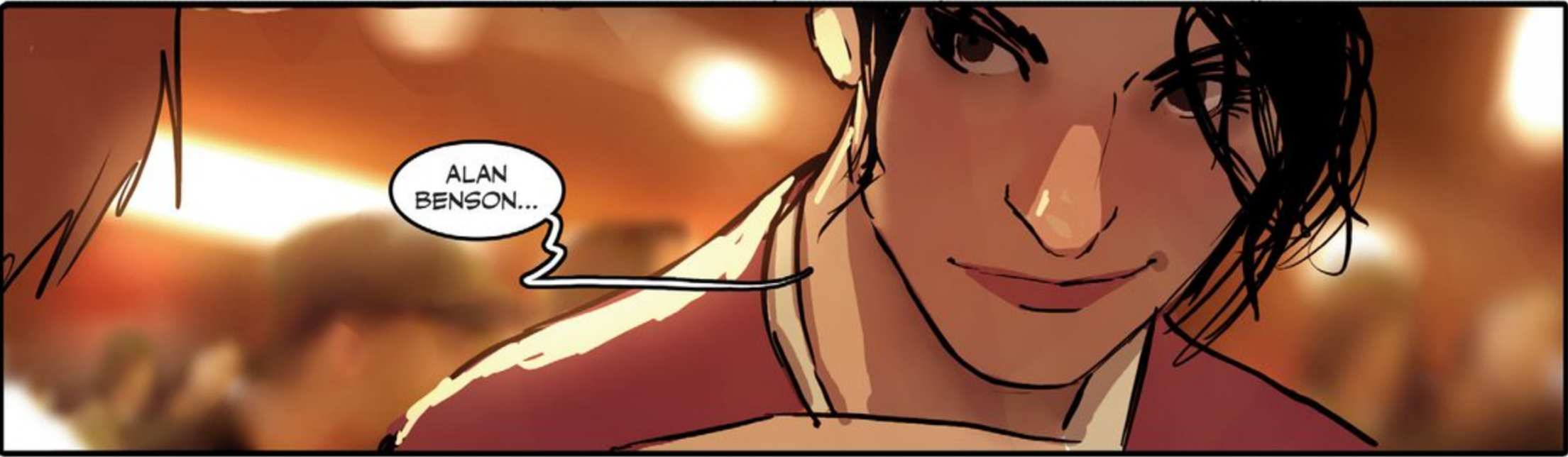
THE CRIMSON.  
FIVE DAYS LATER.















HI, I'M MARCO!

OH, HEY! I'M ALAN!

FOR FUCK'S SAKE, KEEP IT IN YOUR PANTS, MARCO! HE'S NOT PLAYING FOR *YOUR* TEAM!

YOU KNOW, I'M NOT THE ONE WHO **NEEDS** TO BE HERE, AND I CERTAINLY DON'T NEED TO TAKE THIS KIND OF BITCHY **BULLSHIT**, SARAH!

I...

SHIT, MARCO... I'M SORRY, **HONESTLY!** I...I'M A LITTLE ON EDGE RIGHT NOW.

I GET THAT, BUT **CHILL** FOR CRYING OUT LOUD!

YEAH, I... I'LL TRY.

SO THE POINT I WAS TRYING TO GET ACROSS...POORLY... IS THAT MARCO HERE IS GAY AND YOU ARE NOT.



YOU WOULD KNOW THAT.

HEY, THAT WHOLE BUSINESS WITH YOUR SKETCHBOOK WAS NOT MY IDEA...

IT WAS JUST **GUYS** BEING ASSHOLES.



WHILE THE **GIRLS** CHEERED THEM ON, HUH?

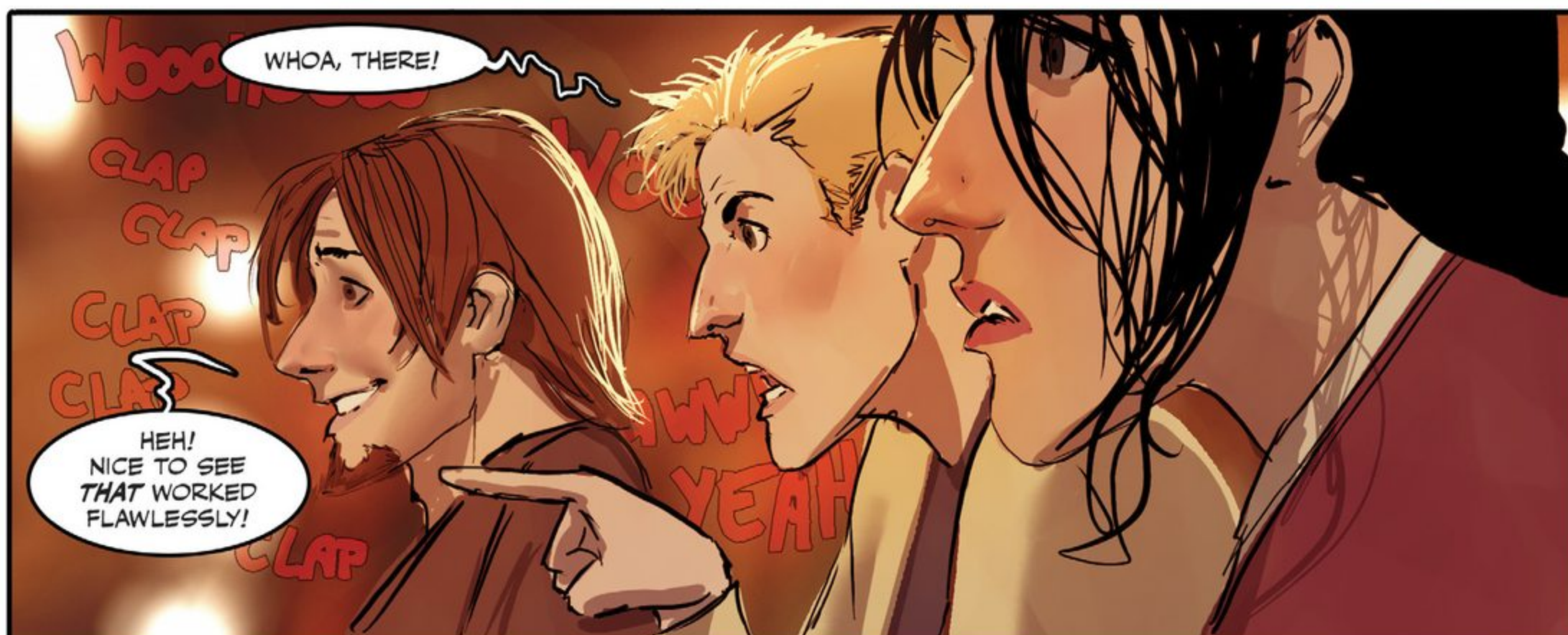
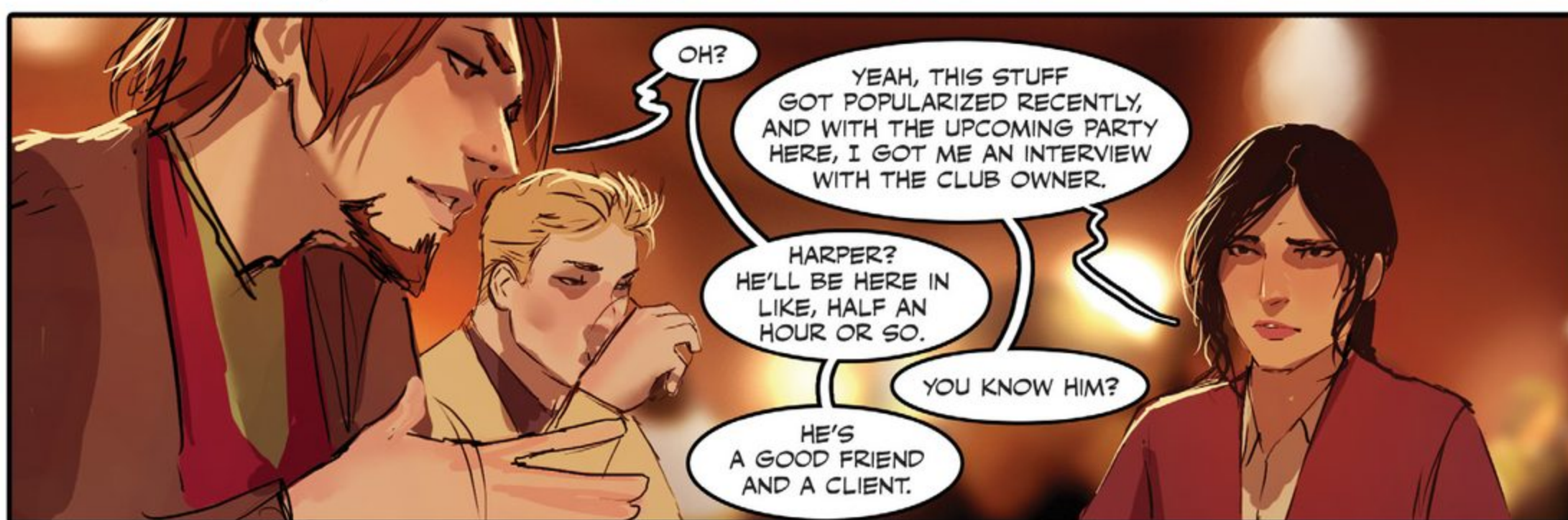
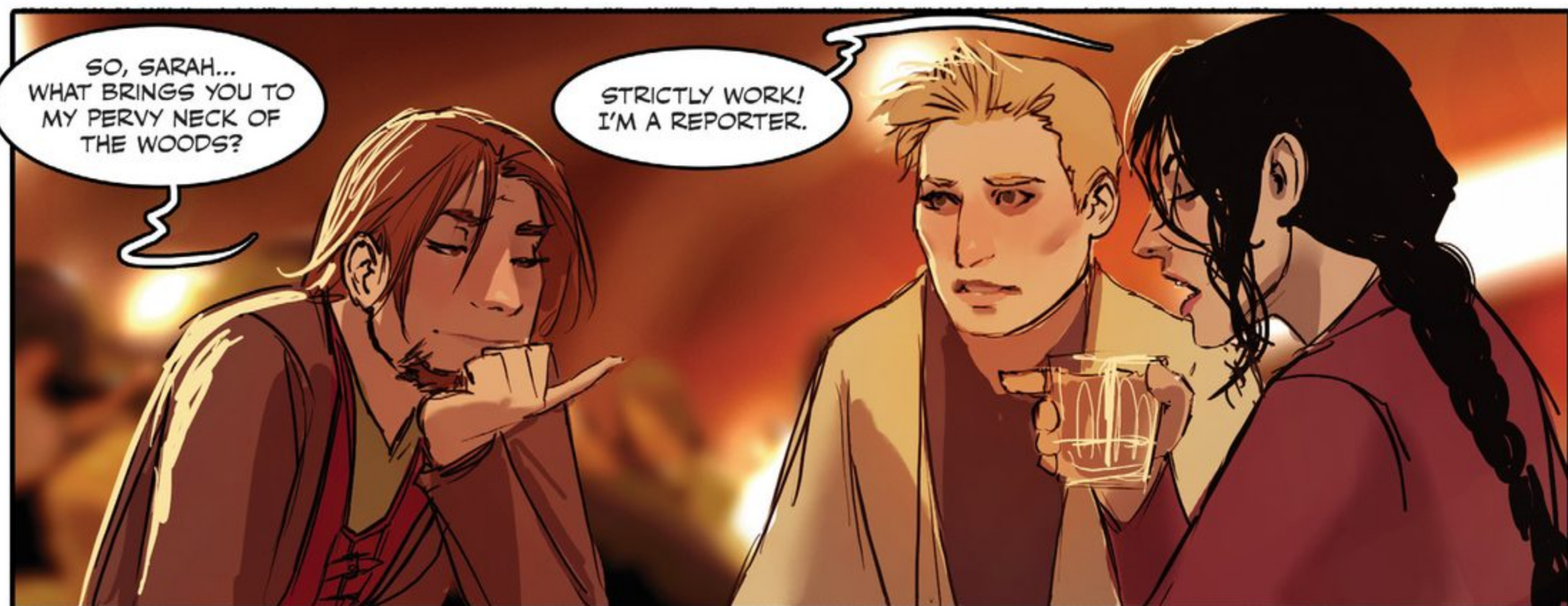


UM...WELL...



AHEM...SO, YOU'RE **STILL** INTO THIS... **STUFF?**

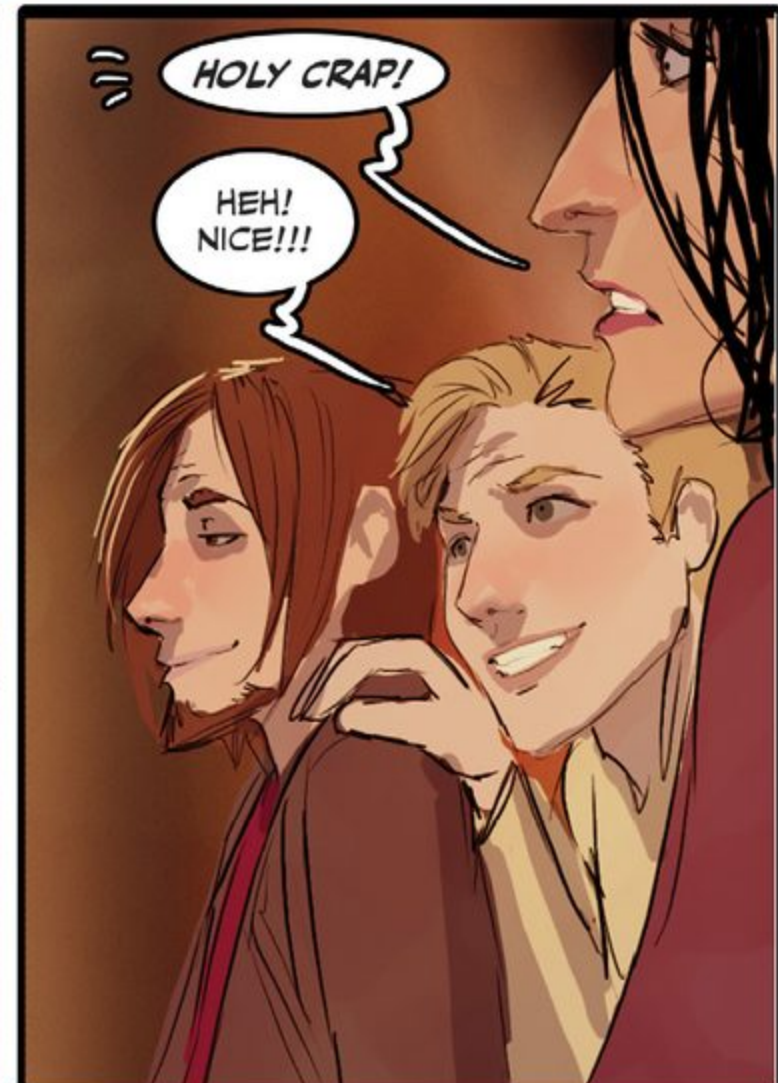
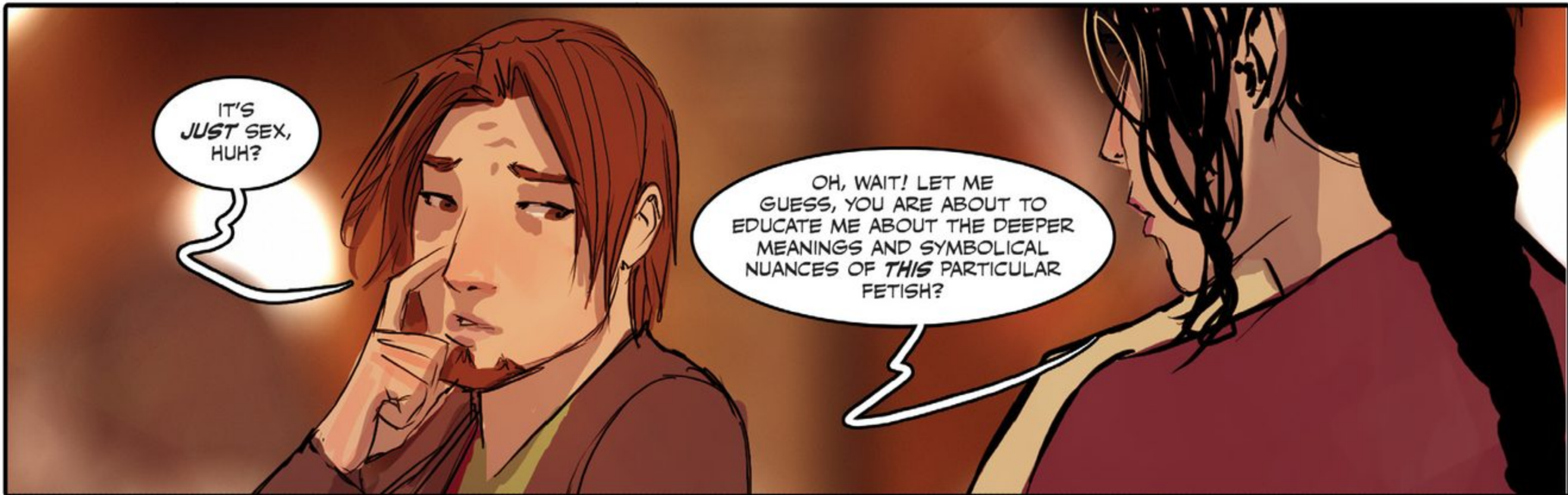
















OKAY, SERIOUSLY ALAN! JUSTIFY THAT!

THAT WAS COOL! COOL NEEDS NO JUSTIFICATION!

HAH! THAT IS *THE CURVE* FOR YOU!



THE HELL IS THE "*CURVE*?"

A PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR THAT IS DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE CRAZINESS THAT WE CALL HUMAN NATURE.



YEAH, NO! THAT *TOTALLY* HELPED!

IT... IT'S JUST A TERM I USE FOR CHASING THAT NEXT-LEVEL *HIGH*. A BIT PRETENTIOUS, SURE... BUT I LIKE IT.



NEXT-LEVEL HIGH?

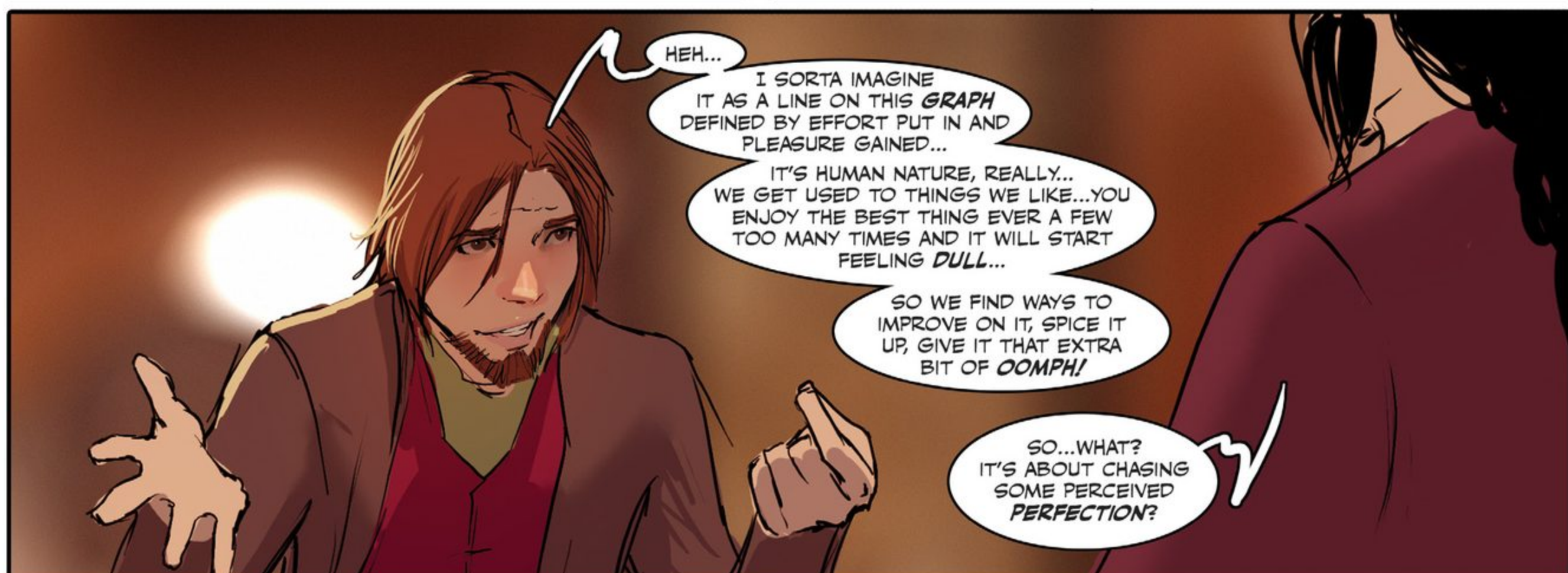
YEAH. THE WAY I SEE IT, THIS STUFF, SEX IN GENERAL...IT'S JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS, YOU KNOW...THINGS WE LIKE ENOUGH TO TRY TO IMPROVE.

AND BEFORE YOU SAY "SEX NEEDS NO IMPROVEMENT..." DOES FOOD? DOES THE CLOTHING WE WEAR, DOES ANYTHING WE LIKE?



WOW... DEFENSIVE MUCH?

I WASN'T GONNA SAY ANYTHING LIKE THAT, BUT GO ON... THE CURVE?



HEH...

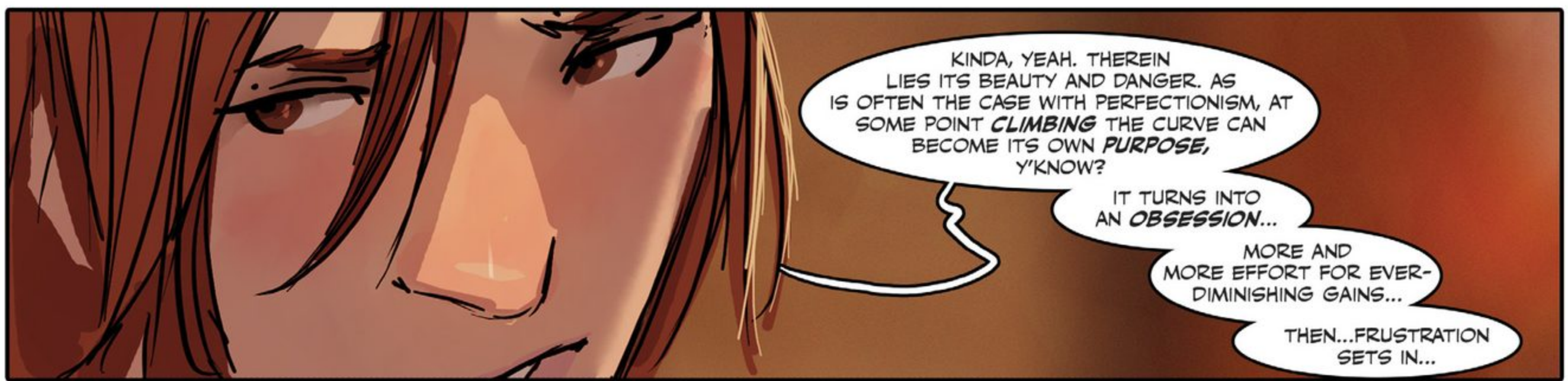
I SORTA IMAGINE IT AS A LINE ON THIS *GRAPH* DEFINED BY EFFORT PUT IN AND PLEASURE GAINED...

IT'S HUMAN NATURE, REALLY... WE GET USED TO THINGS WE LIKE...YOU ENJOY THE BEST THING EVER A FEW TOO MANY TIMES AND IT WILL START FEELING *DULL*...

SO WE FIND WAYS TO IMPROVE ON IT, SPICE IT UP, GIVE IT THAT EXTRA BIT OF *OOMPH*!

SO...WHAT? IT'S ABOUT CHASING SOME PERCEIVED *PERFECTION*?





KINDA, YEAH. THEREIN LIES ITS BEAUTY AND DANGER. AS IS OFTEN THE CASE WITH PERFECTIONISM, AT SOME POINT *CLIMBING* THE CURVE CAN BECOME ITS OWN *PURPOSE*, Y'KNOW?

IT TURNS INTO AN *OBSESSION*...

MORE AND MORE EFFORT FOR EVER-DIMINISHING GAINS...

THEN...FRUSTRATION SETS IN...



PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, HUH?

YUP.



WITH THAT GIRLFRIEND OF YOURS? ALLISON, WAS IT?

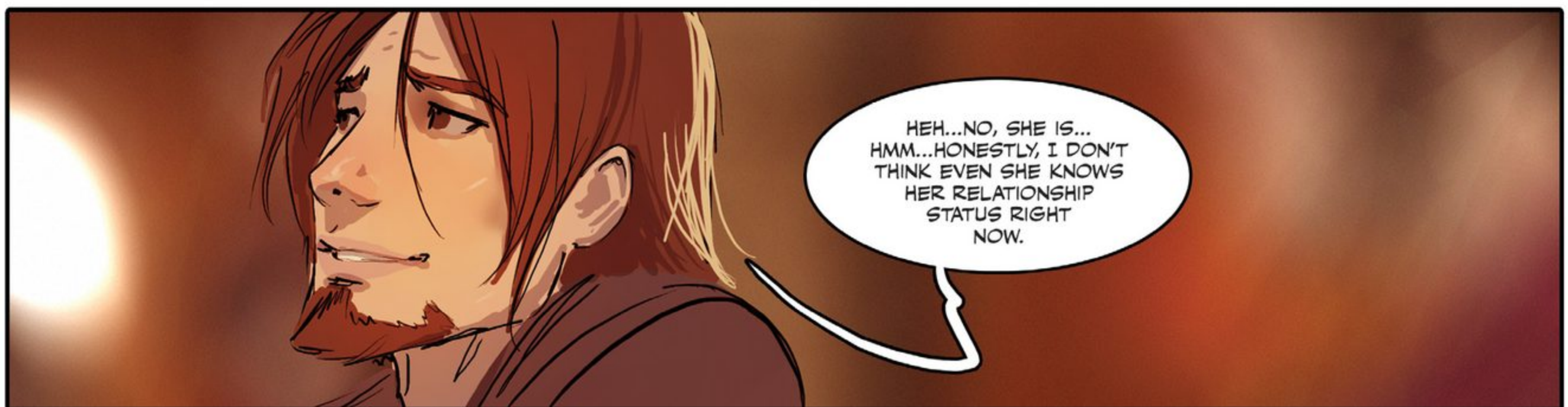


ALLY? NO, NOT SO MUCH.



I SEEM TO REMEMBER YOU TWO BEING QUITE INSEPARABLE BACK THEN...

SO ARE YOU *STILL* WITH HER?



HEH...NO, SHE IS...  
HMM...HONESTLY, I DON'T THINK EVEN SHE KNOWS HER RELATIONSHIP STATUS RIGHT NOW.



DO YOU?

NOT MY BUSINESS...THOUGH I COULD GUESS.



NO, I MEAN *YOUR* RELATIONSHIP STATUS?



HEY, SO, UM, YOU WERE SAYING HOW THIS CURVE RELATES TO *THOSE TWO*?

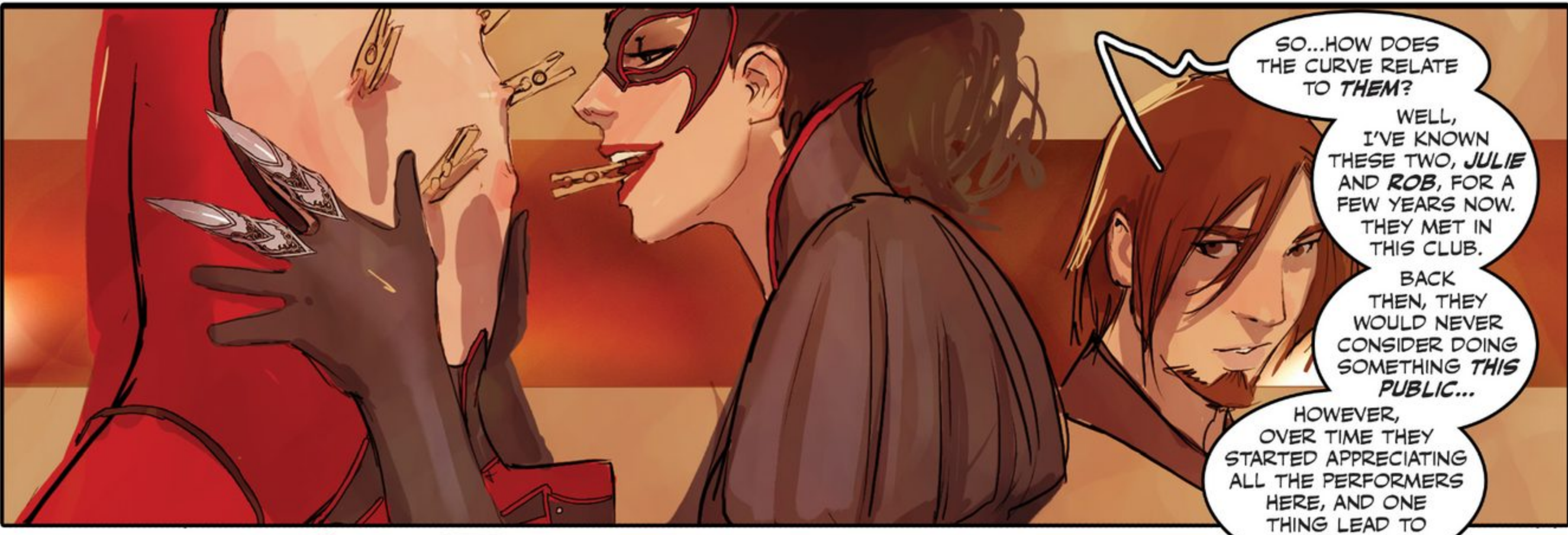
HUH?



OH...RIGHT.

KEEP IT IN *YOUR* PANTS!





SO...HOW DOES THE CURVE RELATE TO THEM?

WELL, I'VE KNOWN THESE TWO, JULIE AND ROB, FOR A FEW YEARS NOW. THEY MET IN THIS CLUB.

BACK THEN, THEY WOULD NEVER CONSIDER DOING SOMETHING **THIS PUBLIC...**

HOWEVER, OVER TIME THEY STARTED APPRECIATING ALL THE PERFORMERS HERE, AND ONE THING LEAD TO ANOTHER.



NOW, DON'T GET ME WRONG, THEY ARE BY NO MEANS **REPRESENTATIVE** OF OTHER BDSM PRACTITIONERS.

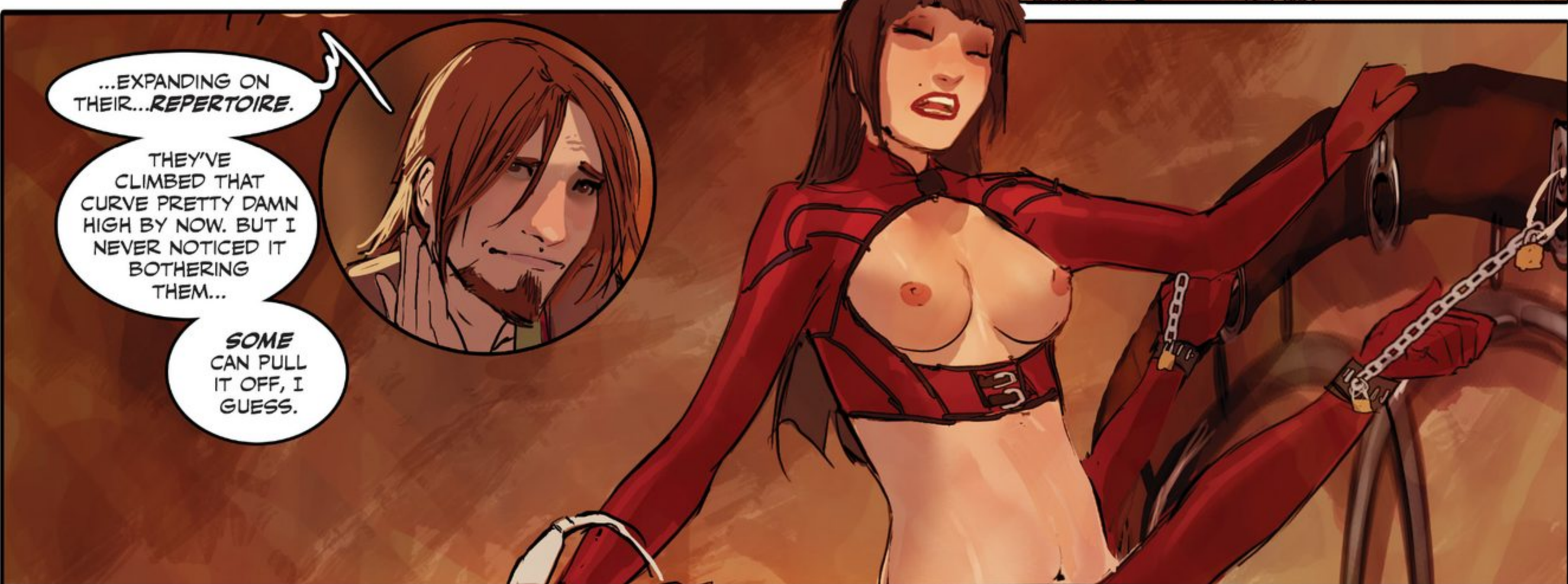
WE DON'T ALL AT SOME POINT GO: "**FUCKYEAH!** TIME TO GET FREAKY ON A STAGE!"

...BUT THE CURVE WORKS THE SAME WAY.

THEY TOO STARTED THINGS OFF SLOWLY ONCE...

GOT TO KNOW EACH OTHER'S **LIKINGS** AND **LIMITS...**

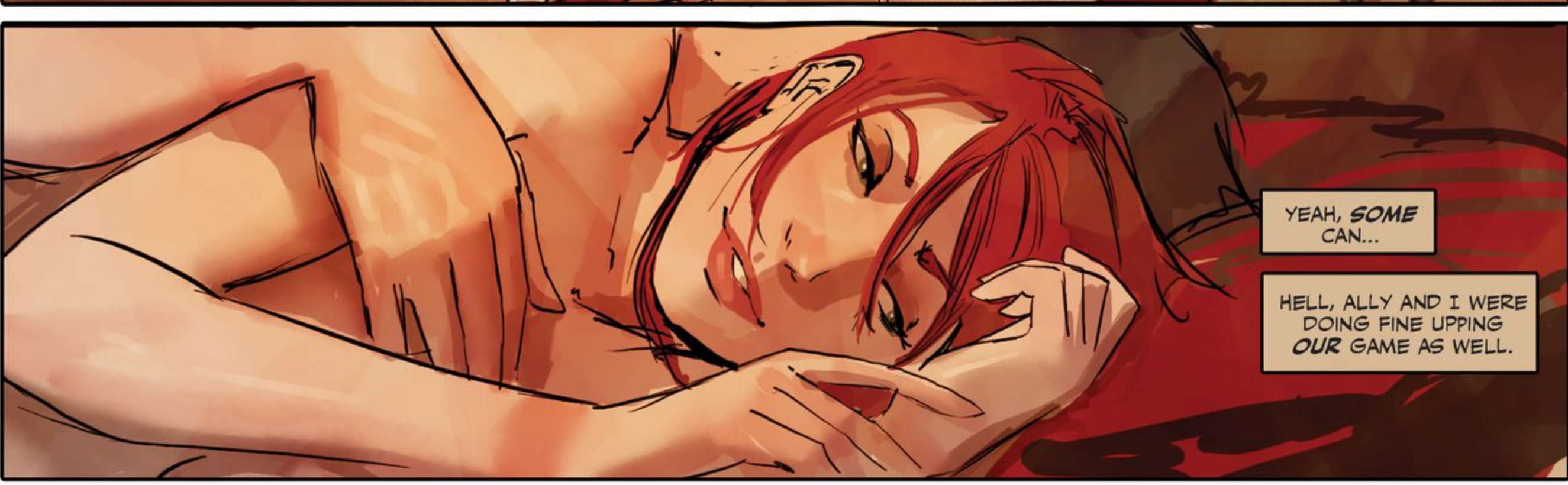
BUT THEN, LIKE **MOST** PRACTITIONERS, THEY BEGUN **INTENSIFYING** THEIR GAME...



...EXPANDING ON THEIR...**REPertoire**.

THEY'VE CLIMBED THAT CURVE PRETTY DAMN HIGH BY NOW. BUT I NEVER NOTICED IT BOTHERING THEM...

**SOME** CAN PULL IT OFF, I GUESS.



YEAH, **SOME** CAN...

HELL, ALLY AND I WERE DOING FINE UPPING **OUR** GAME AS WELL.



FOR A WHILE,  
AT LEAST.

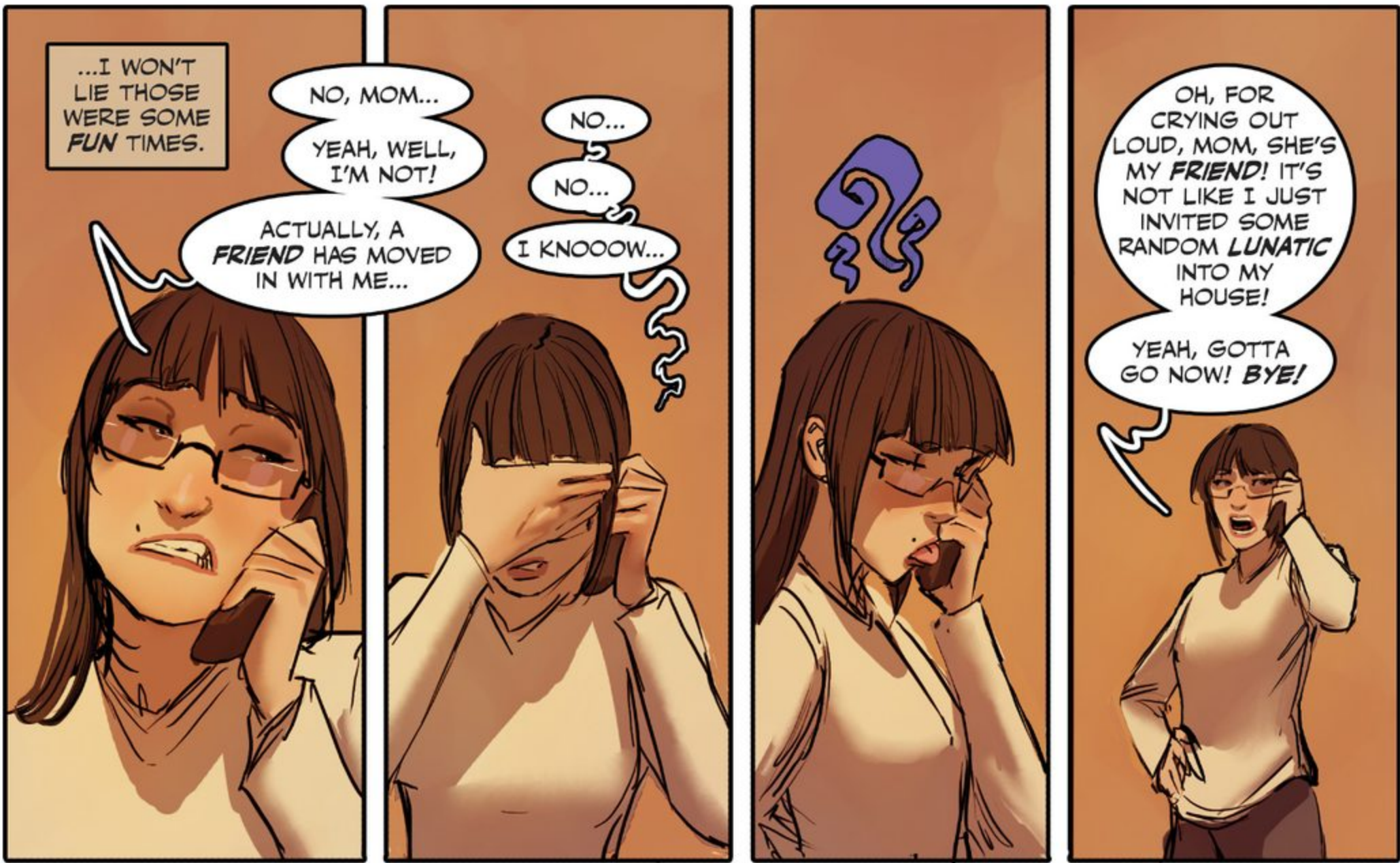
YOU ROCK!

HEH, NOT  
TOO SHABBY,  
YOURSELF!

BUT, YEAH...









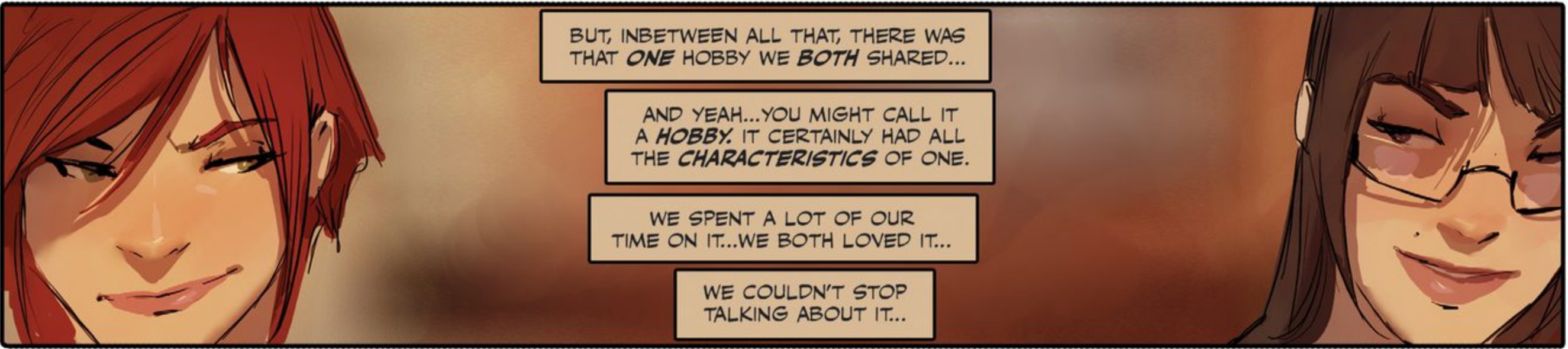


SURE, EVEN AT HOME, WE HAD OUR PRIVATE TIME...INDULGING IN OUR OWN UNIQUE PASTIMES.

FOR ME, IT WAS MOSTLY WRITING AS I WAS...SHALL WE SAY, *INSPIRED*.

ALLY DID HER GAMING THING...AN *UNMISTAKABLE* ACTIVITY THAT WAS GENERALLY ACCOMPANIED BY SHOUTING OUT STRANGE TERMS AS *KILLSTEALING*, *NOOB*, AND *CASHOAR*. YEAH, *YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS MINE*.

DAMMIT, VLAD, YOU INCOMPETENT CASHOAR, STOP LOOTING AND START TANKING!



BUT, INBETWEEN ALL THAT, THERE WAS THAT *ONE* HOBBY WE *BOTH* SHARED...

AND YEAH...YOU MIGHT CALL IT A *HOBBY*. IT CERTAINLY HAD ALL THE *CHARACTERISTICS* OF ONE.

WE SPENT A LOT OF OUR TIME ON IT...WE BOTH LOVED IT...

WE COULDN'T STOP TALKING ABOUT IT...



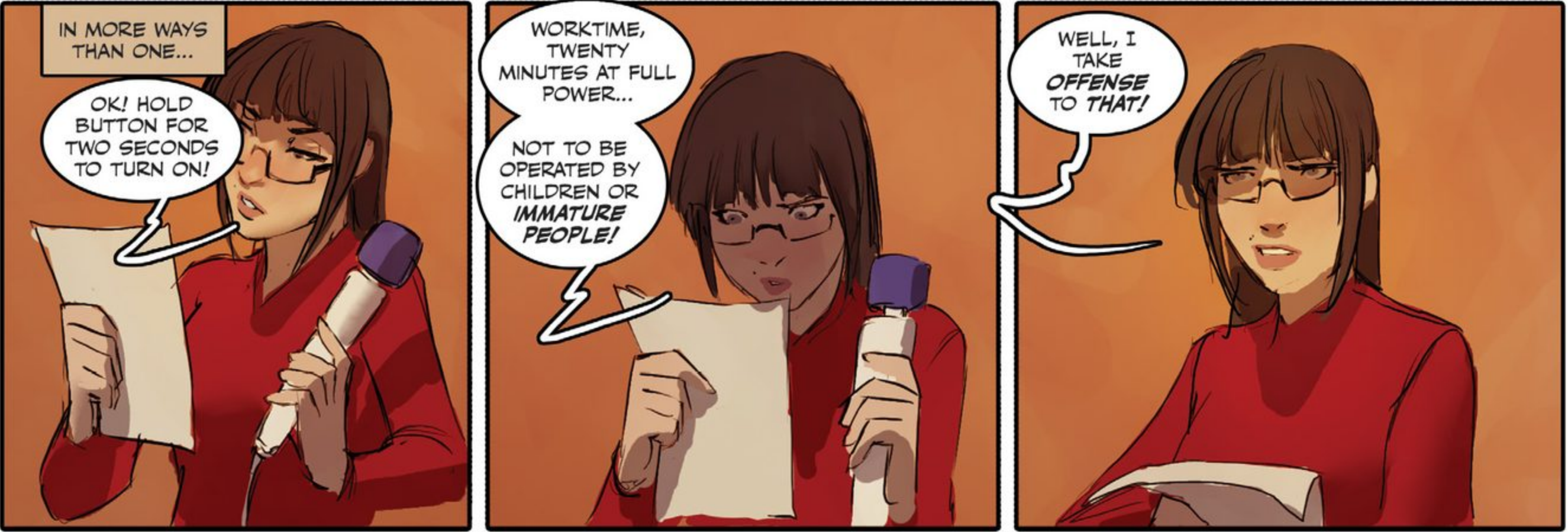
AND WE BURNED WAY TOO MUCH MONEY ON IT...

HEY, ALLY, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS...



HONESTLY... WE WERE LIKE FRIGGIN' KIDS WITH TOYS.

HEY, LISA! ARE YOU MY MOM?  
WAAAH!



IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE...

OK! HOLD BUTTON FOR TWO SECONDS TO TURN ON!

WORKTIME, TWENTY MINUTES AT FULL POWER...

NOT TO BE OPERATED BY CHILDREN OR IMMATURE PEOPLE!

WELL, I TAKE OFFENSE TO THAT!



AND, WELL...LIKE ANY HOBBY TAKEN SERIOUSLY, WE STARTED PLAYING OUR GAME MORE OFTEN.

AND MORE INTENSIVELY...

ALLY JUSTIFIED IT IN A...SHALL WE SAY, *MATHEMATICAL* WAY...

WITH UNSYNCHRONIZED *PERIODS*, AND MUTUAL RELUCTANCE TO...UM... RUN THE RED LIGHT...

WE HAD ROUGHLY TWO WEEKS OF PLAYTIME PER MONTH.

SO DAMN IT, WE WERE GONNA MAKE THE *MOST* OF THEM!

SO, I'LL BE BACK IN ABOUT FOUR HOURS.

SO DON'T GO WANDERING OFF ANYWHERE, OKAY?

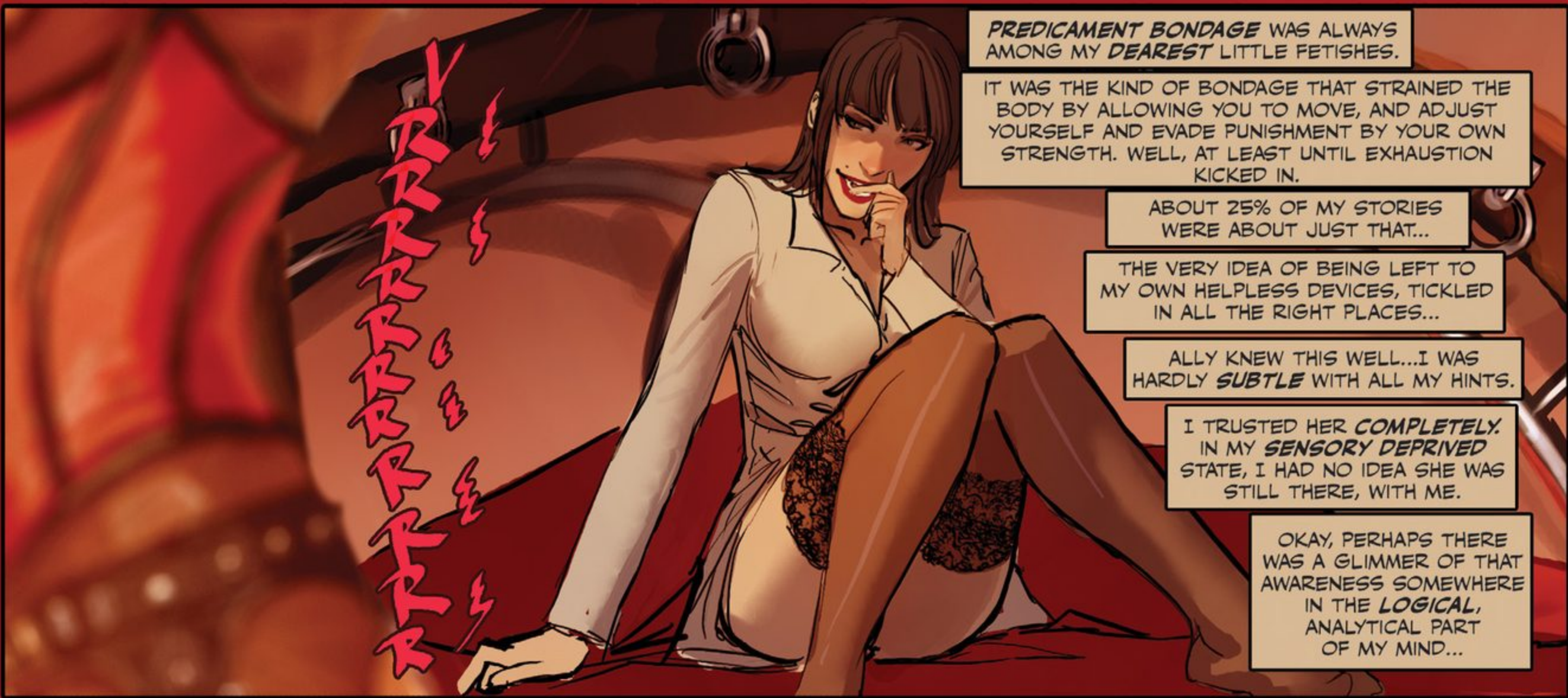
AFFE FWAF!











PREDICAMENT BONDAGE WAS ALWAYS AMONG MY *DEAREST* LITTLE FETISHES.

IT WAS THE KIND OF BONDAGE THAT STRAINED THE BODY BY ALLOWING YOU TO MOVE, AND ADJUST YOURSELF AND EVADE PUNISHMENT BY YOUR OWN STRENGTH. WELL, AT LEAST UNTIL EXHAUSTION KICKED IN.

ABOUT 25% OF MY STORIES WERE ABOUT JUST THAT...

THE VERY IDEA OF BEING LEFT TO MY OWN HELPLESS DEVICES, TICKLED IN ALL THE RIGHT PLACES...

ALLY KNEW THIS WELL...I WAS HARDLY *SUBTLE* WITH ALL MY HINTS.

I TRUSTED HER *COMPLETELY*. IN MY *SENSORY DEPRIVED* STATE, I HAD NO IDEA SHE WAS STILL THERE, WITH ME.

OKAY, PERHAPS THERE WAS A GLIMMER OF THAT AWARENESS SOMEWHERE IN THE *LOGICAL*, ANALYTICAL PART OF MY MIND...



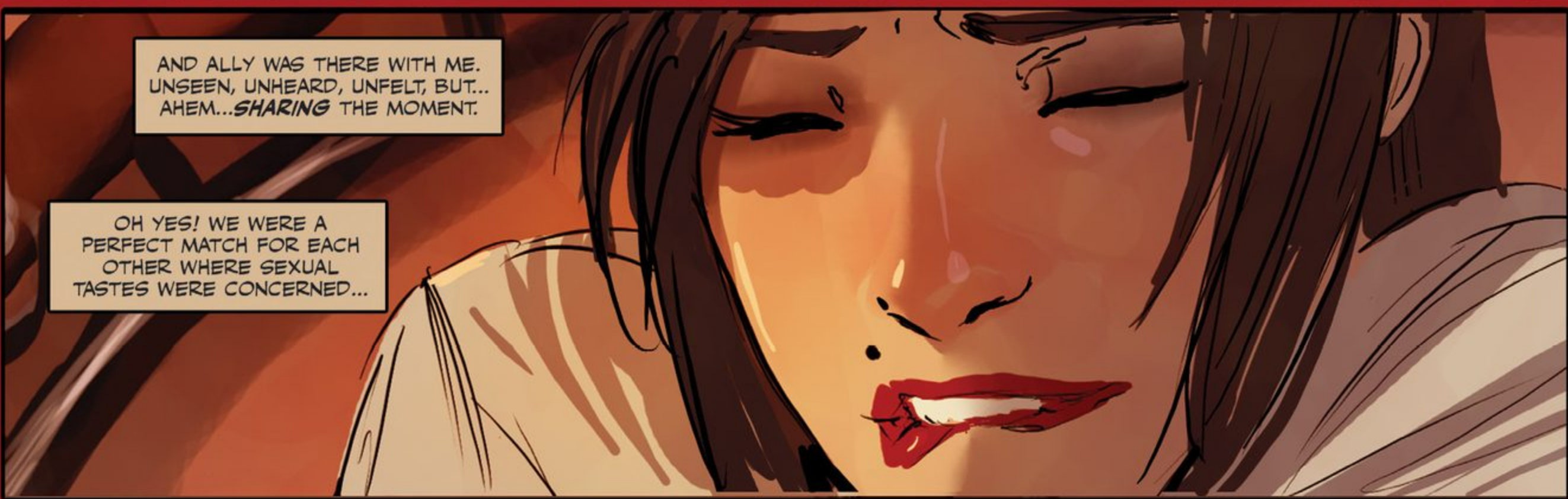
IN THAT LOGICAL PART OF MY BRAIN, I REMEMBERED OUR CONVERSATIONS. HER OWN EXPERIENCE IN COLLEGE, THE FEAR SHE FELT DURING THAT ONE BOTCHED SESSION IN THAT ATTIC ROOM...IT SHAPED HER INTO A DOMME THAT ABOVE ALL PRIORITIZED *SAFETY*. NEVER LEAVE THE SUB ALONE.

YUP! *LOGICAL BRAIN* KNEW THIS WELL...

BUT, THE THING ABOUT AN INTENSE *ORGASM* IS... LOGIC IS...WELL...IT'S IN ANOTHER CASTLE. (YES, I PICKED THAT REFERENCE UP FROM ALLY!)

ANYHOO, THERE WE WERE... I WAS LOST IN A DARK WORLD OF *SENSATIONS*...

(NO, I'M NOT TRYING TO BE FRIGGIN' *POETIC*, I MEAN IT IN A VERY *LITERAL* WAY!)



AND ALLY WAS THERE WITH ME. UNSEEN, UNHEARD, UNFELT, BUT... AHM...*SHARING* THE MOMENT.

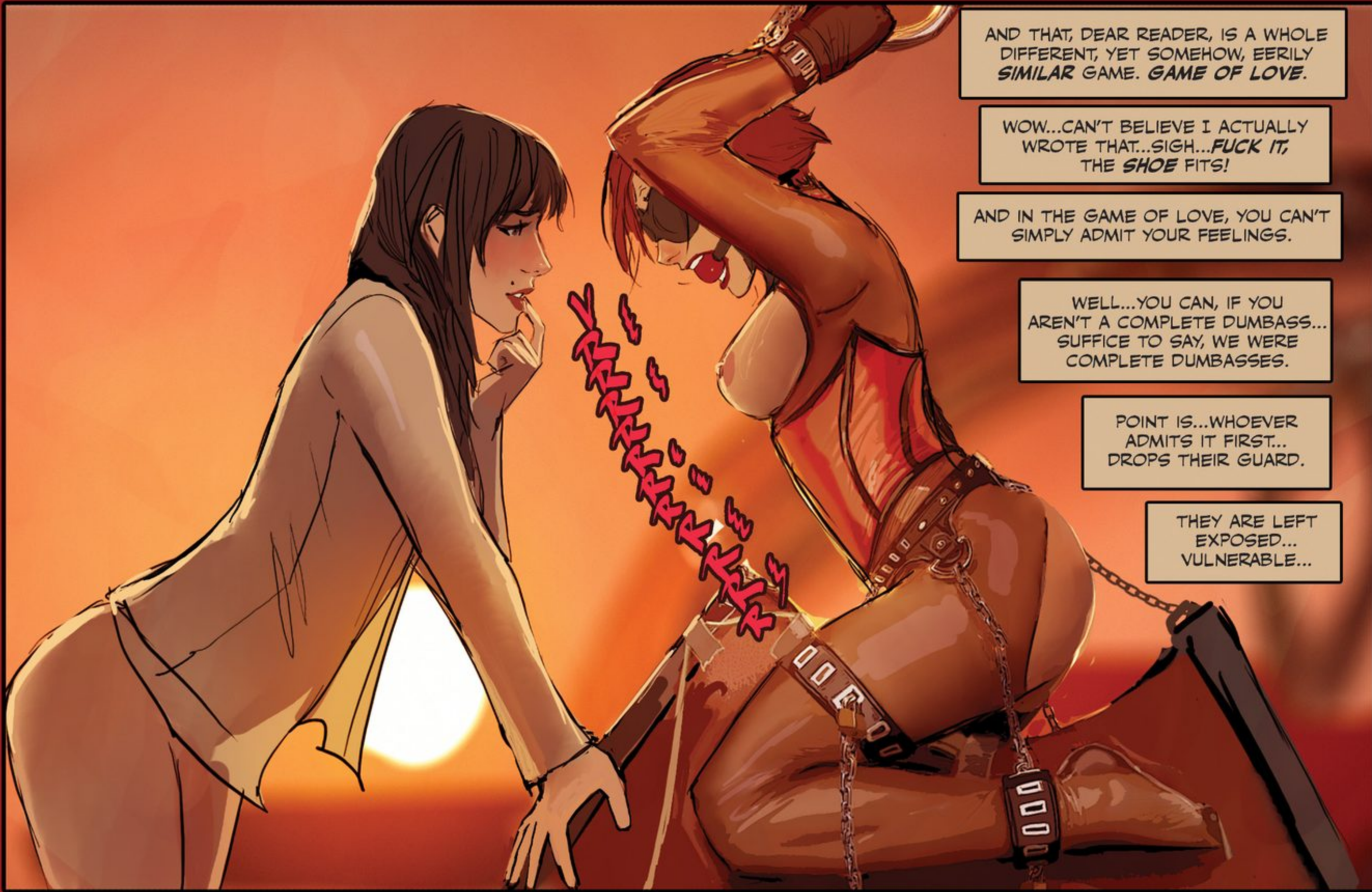
OH YES! WE WERE A PERFECT MATCH FOR EACH OTHER WHERE SEXUAL TASTES WERE CONCERNED...





BUT THERE WAS THAT  
ONE TEENY, TINY PROBLEM...

WE WERE FALLING FOR  
EACH OTHER, *HARD!*



AND THAT, DEAR READER, IS A WHOLE  
DIFFERENT, YET SOMEHOW, EERILY  
*SIMILAR* GAME. *GAME OF LOVE.*

WOW...CAN'T BELIEVE I ACTUALLY  
WROTE THAT...SIGH...*FUCK IT,*  
THE *SHOE* FITS!

AND IN THE GAME OF LOVE, YOU CAN'T  
SIMPLY ADMIT YOUR FEELINGS.

WELL...YOU CAN, IF YOU  
AREN'T A COMPLETE DUMBASS...  
SUFFICE TO SAY, WE WERE  
COMPLETE DUMBASSES.

POINT IS...WHOEVER  
ADMITS IT FIRST...  
DROPS THEIR GUARD.

THEY ARE LEFT  
EXPOSED...  
VULNERABLE...



THE OTHER  
PERSON AT THAT  
MOMENT HOLDS  
ALL THE POWER.

LISA...I KNOW YOU  
PROBABLY CAN'T HEAR ME  
BUT I THINK I...L...

I WILL AT THIS POINT SPARE YOU MY GAGGED SHRIEK, RESULTING FROM ABOUT HALF  
AN HOUR OF SENSORY DEPRIVATION INTERRUPTED BY A SINGLE TOUCH...

I WILL ALSO SPARE YOU A LENGTHY SESSION OF CUSSING ALLY OUT...

NOT FOR LEAVING ME. THAT WAS ONE OF MY FAVORITE  
FANTASIES FINALLY REALIZED...

BUT DAMN, SHE ALMOST GAVE ME A HEARTATTACK!



BUT YEAH, I LOVE YOU!  
SIMPLE, RIGHT?

AND YET WE WERE BOTH  
TERRIFIED OF SPEAKING  
THOSE WORDS.

I SAID IT BEFORE...  
WE CLINGED TO OUR  
"GOOD ENOUGH."

CHANGING THE "GOOD ENOUGH"  
TO A "WHAT IF" TAKES COURAGE...

PROBLEM WAS...OUR "GOOD  
ENOUGH" WAS TOO GOOD...

IN FACT, OUR "GOOD ENOUGH"  
WAS FUCKING INCREDIBLE!

WE TURNED OUR LONG-CHERISHED  
SEXUAL FANTASIES INTO REALITY.

THIS LITTLE "FRIENDS  
BOINKING" THING WORKED  
ON PAPER...OR...IN THIS  
CASE CHALKBOARD...

SERIOUSLY: HOT IDEA,  
CRAPPY AFTERTASTE!

WE BOTH AVOIDED DEALING  
WITH THE EMOTIONAL  
GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM...

OH, WE HAD OUR REASONS!

STUPID, ASS-BACKWARDS,  
UPSIDE DOWN REASONS...

THEY WERE THE KIND OF REASONS THAT  
ONLY MADE SENSE TO AN INSECURE MIND.

AND, BOY, DID OUR MINDS QUALIFY.

IT WAS ALL KINDS OF MENTAL BULLSHIT.  
FROM ALLY'S STANDPOINT, WE WERE *FRIENDS*. I CAME TO HER LOOKING FOR A  
*DOMME*...WHAT WOULD I THINK OF HER IF SHE WERE TO JUST, ALL OF SUDDEN,  
SHOW SUCH A VULNERABLE SIDE TO ME? LORD KNOWS, SHE HATED HERSELF  
ENOUGH FOR HER *CLUB MELTDOWN* AS IT WAS. (HER WORDS, NOT MINE.)

EVEN WORSE, SHE WONDERED IF I WOULD FEEL *PRESSURED*  
BY IT. AFTER ALL, SHE *WAS* MY *DOMME*, AND I LIVED UNDER  
HER ROOF...IN A WAY, SHE FELT LIKE SHE HELD AN UNFAIR  
PSYCHOLOGICAL *LEVERAGE* OVER ME...

SO, YEAH...APPARENTLY, A BADASS CORSET AND A WHIP MAY  
HAVE GIVEN HER A SENSE OF POWER...BUT THEY DIDN'T  
DO SHIT AGAINST HER EMOTIONAL *INSECURITY*.

BUT I WAS NO BETTER...

I FELT LIKE I  
WAS CROSSING THE LINE BY  
FALLING FOR HER...

AS A SUB, I WAS SUPPOSED TO ADORE HER...  
AND HERE I WAS (FROM MY PERSPECTIVE)  
ONE-SIDEDLY TAKING IT TOO FAR.

I HONESTLY THOUGHT I WOULD  
LOOK DESPERATELY CLINGY  
IF I WAS TO ADMIT MY FEELINGS.

NO!

I WASN'T GOING TO  
RUIN THIS FOR US.

SO, INSTEAD, WE KEPT  
PLAYING OUR USUAL  
GAMES BETTER,  
HARDER...

WITH MORE DEDICATION.

AND BEHIND OUR PASSIONATE  
PERFORMANCES, WE *HOPED*...

"MAYBE SHE WILL SEE."

"MAYBE SHE WILL  
RECOGNIZE IT!"

"MAYBE IN THIS  
DEVOTION AND PUSHING  
OF BOUNDARIES, SHE  
WILL UNDERSTAND..."

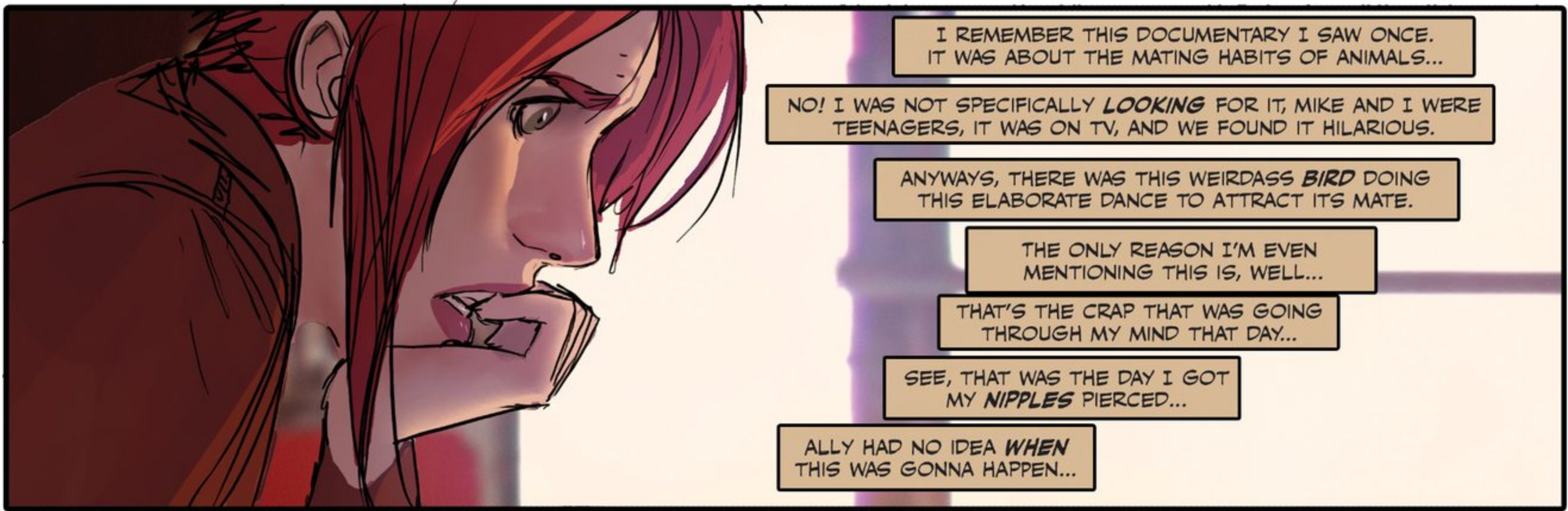
YEAH...I'M WELL AWARE THAT I WAS  
DOING THE SAME DAMN THING THAT  
RUINED MY PRIOR RELATIONSHIP...

SIGNALS AND HINTS ARE A SHITTY REPLACEMENT FOR HONEST  
COMMUNICATION. WHAT CAN I SAY? HINDSIGHT IS 20/20!

BUT YEAH...

SPEAKING OF SIGNALS  
AND TRYING TO IMPRESS  
EACH OTHER...





I REMEMBER THIS DOCUMENTARY I SAW ONCE. IT WAS ABOUT THE MATING HABITS OF ANIMALS...

NO! I WAS NOT SPECIFICALLY **LOOKING** FOR IT, MIKE AND I WERE TEENAGERS, IT WAS ON TV, AND WE FOUND IT HILARIOUS.

ANYWAYS, THERE WAS THIS WEIRDASS **BIRD** DOING THIS ELABORATE DANCE TO ATTRACT ITS MATE.

THE ONLY REASON I'M EVEN MENTIONING THIS IS, WELL...

THAT'S THE CRAP THAT WAS GOING THROUGH MY MIND THAT DAY...

SEE, THAT WAS THE DAY I GOT MY **NIPPLES** PIERCED...

ALLY HAD NO IDEA **WHEN** THIS WAS GONNA HAPPEN...



I WAS PLANNING ON SURPRISING HER...

I WAS, TO PUT IT MILDLY, **FREAKING** OUT!

PEOPLE SAY YOU SHOULD BE YOURSELF, YOU DON'T HAVE TO CHANGE FOR ANYONE...



BUT...WE **DO** CHANGE...

WE DO TRY TO PUT OUR BEST FOOT FORWARD TO IMPRESS EACH OTHER...

BE IT AS SIMPLE AS ACTING NICER, DRESSING BETTER, TUCKING IN YOUR GUT...OR AS POTENTIALLY STUPID AS DOING STUFF LIKE THIS.

WE ARE ALL, AT SOME POINT, LIKE THAT WEIRDASS DANCING BIRD, TRYING TO IMPRESS EACH OTHER.



OKAY! SO, LISA, THIS IS KATJA! SHE WILL BE DOING YOUR PIERCING.

HEY!





OH...UM H-HEY,  
I THOUGHT YOU WERE GONNA  
DO IT, ANNE.

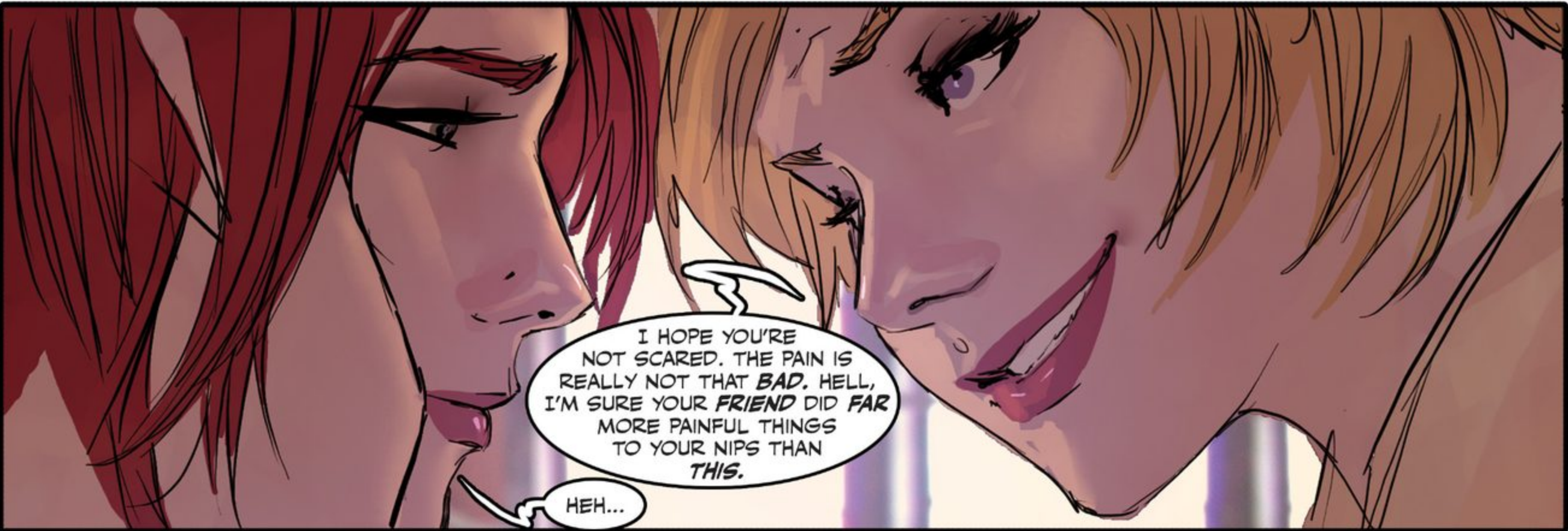


I THINK YOUR  
FRIEND NEEDS A PEP  
TALK WHILE I GET  
MY STUFF READY.



HEY, YOU  
ALRIGHT?

UH-HUH...



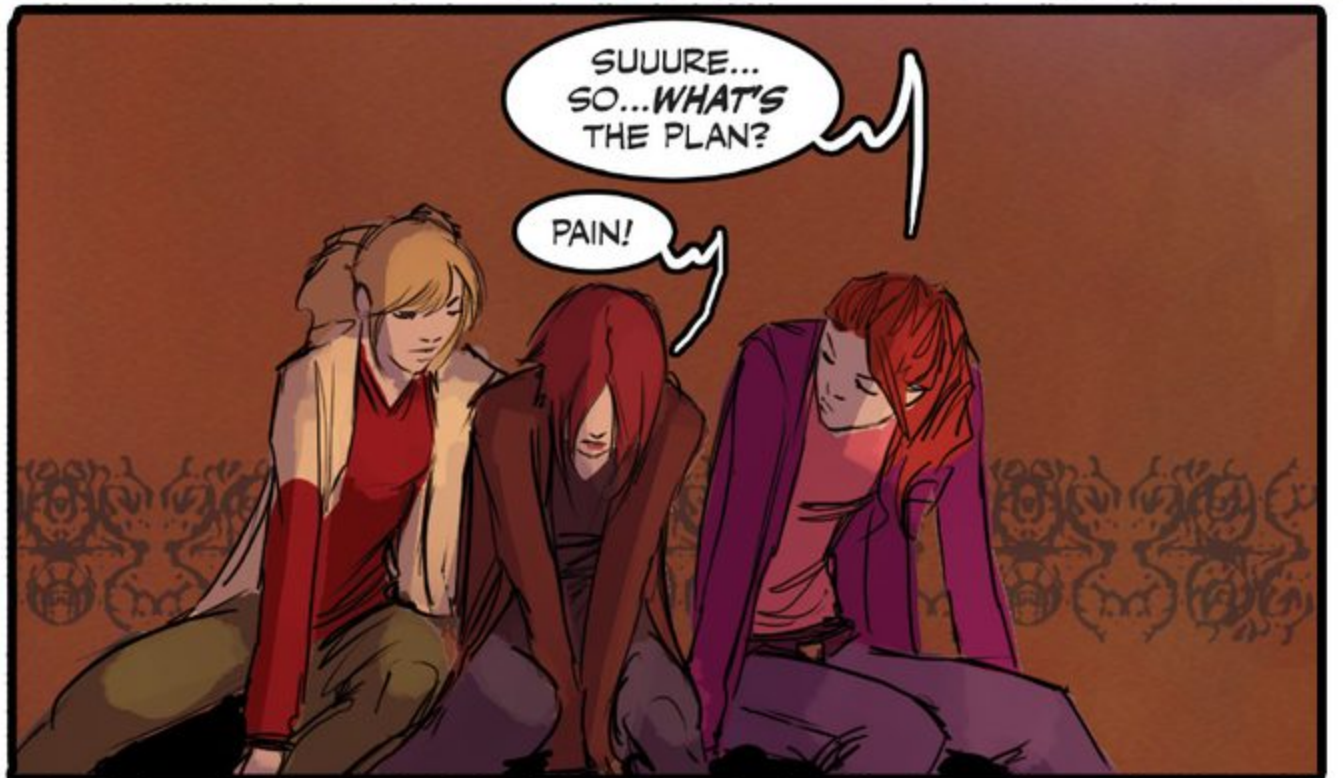
I HOPE YOU'RE  
NOT SCARED. THE PAIN IS  
REALLY NOT THAT *BAD*. HELL,  
I'M SURE YOUR *FRIEND* DID *FAR*  
MORE PAINFUL THINGS  
TO YOUR NIPS THAN  
*THIS*.

HEH...



HEY, WAIT UP!  
I'M NOT MISSING...









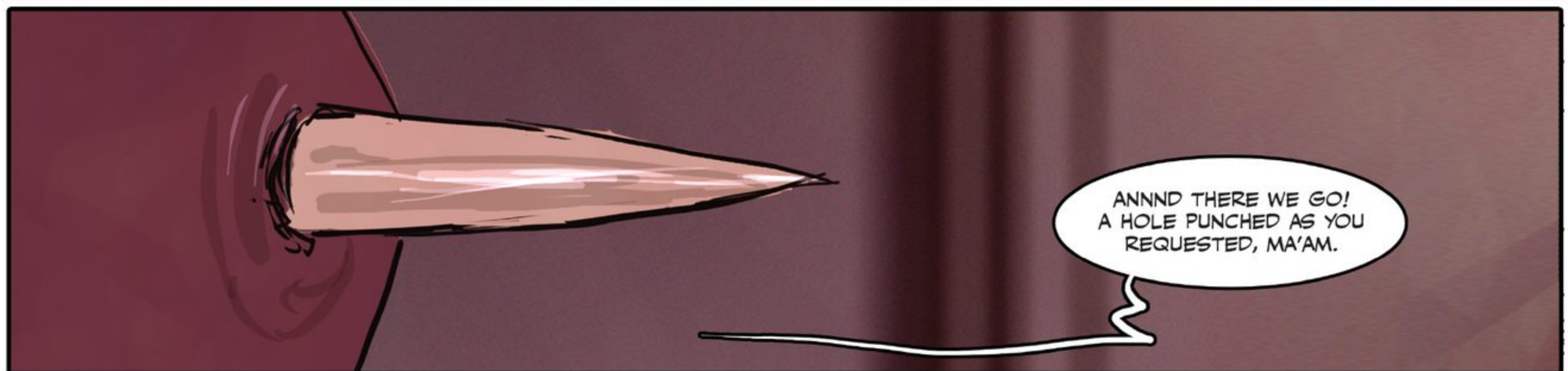
THE BEST...

AH, IF YOU COULD  
VOMIT WORDS...

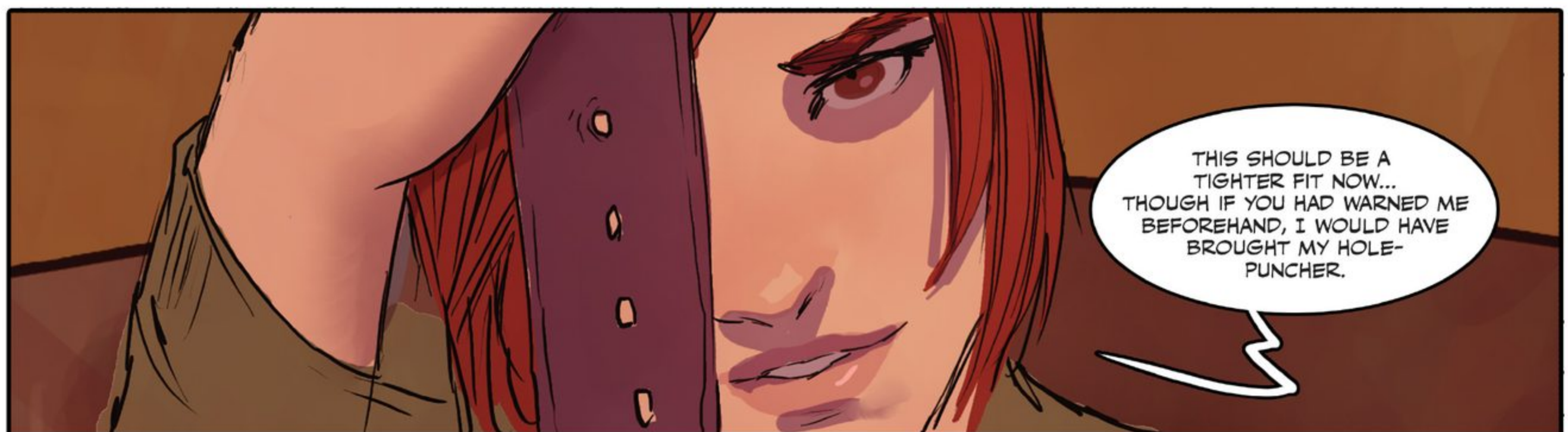


THEN IT'S  
SETTLED! LET'S  
POKE SOME  
HOLES IN YA!

COULD YOU  
PERHAPS FIND A WAY  
TO PHRASE THAT IN  
A LESS CHEERY  
MANNER?



ANNND THERE WE GO!  
A HOLE PUNCHED AS YOU  
REQUESTED, MA'AM.



THIS SHOULD BE A  
TIGHTER FIT NOW...  
THOUGH IF YOU HAD WARNED ME  
BEFOREHAND, I WOULD HAVE  
BROUGHT MY HOLE-  
PUNCHER.



DON'T WORRY  
ABOUT IT -- IT WAS CHEAP  
TO BEGIN WITH...NOOOOW,  
ABOUT THAT  
RIG IDEA.

I SAID **NO!**

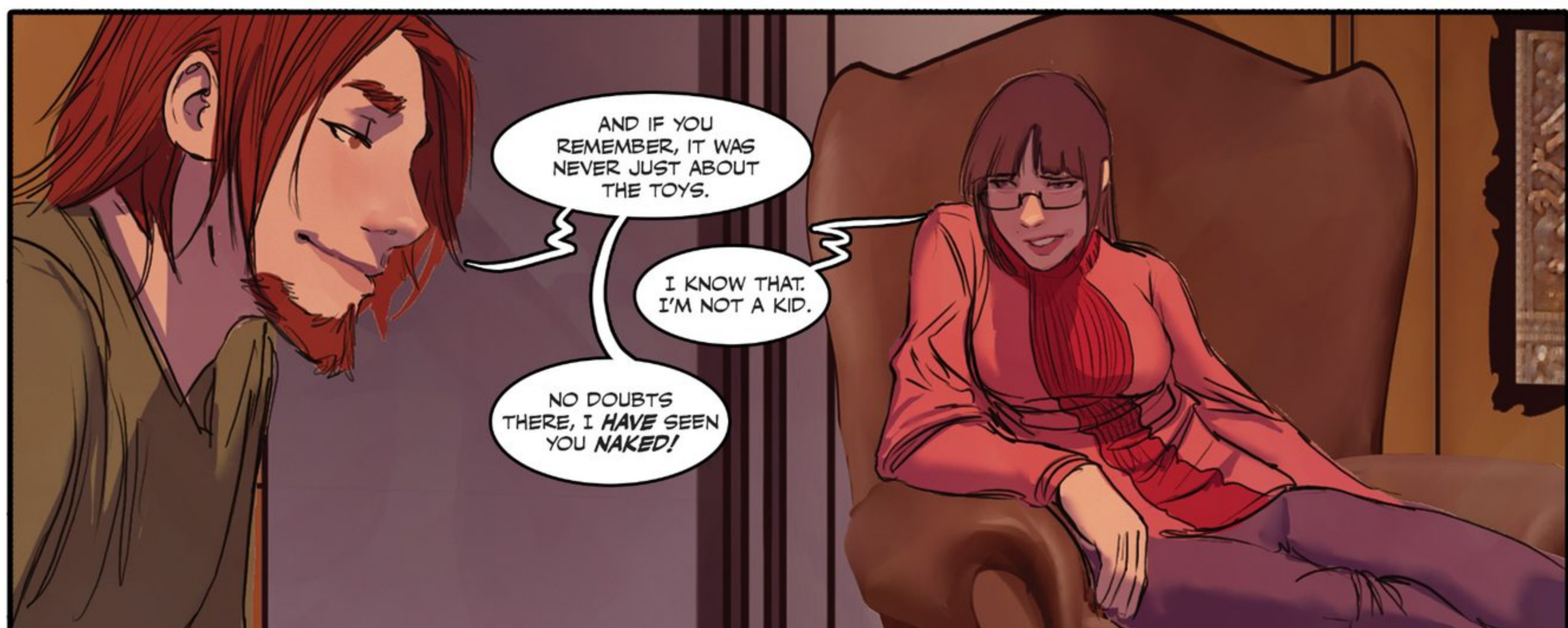
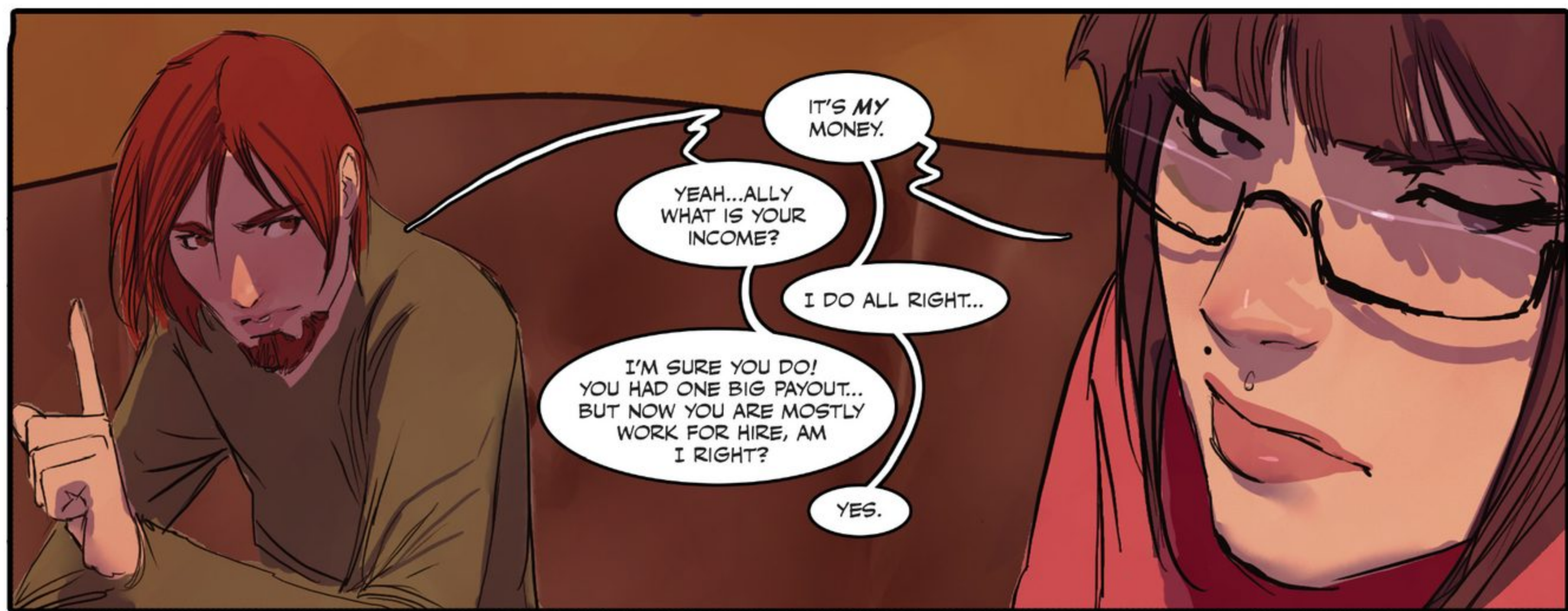
OH, COME ON! DON'T  
BE SUCH A DICK!

I'M **NOT!**  
I STILL BELIEVE YOU  
ARE BURNING TOO MUCH  
MONEY ON UNNECESSARY  
GEAR.

IT'S NOT  
**UNNECESSARY!**

ALLY, I'VE  
**SEEN** YOUR ROOM,  
WHAT YOU GOT THERE  
WOULD SUFFICE **ANY**  
DOM FOR A  
**LIFETIME!**









THAT JUST  
SOUNDED ALL  
KINDS OF  
WRONG...



UGH...I KNOW...  
GIVE ME A BREAK, I  
SLEPT LIKE FIVE HOURS  
AT BEST. MY WIT IS SHARP  
AS A DONUT RIGHT  
NOW.

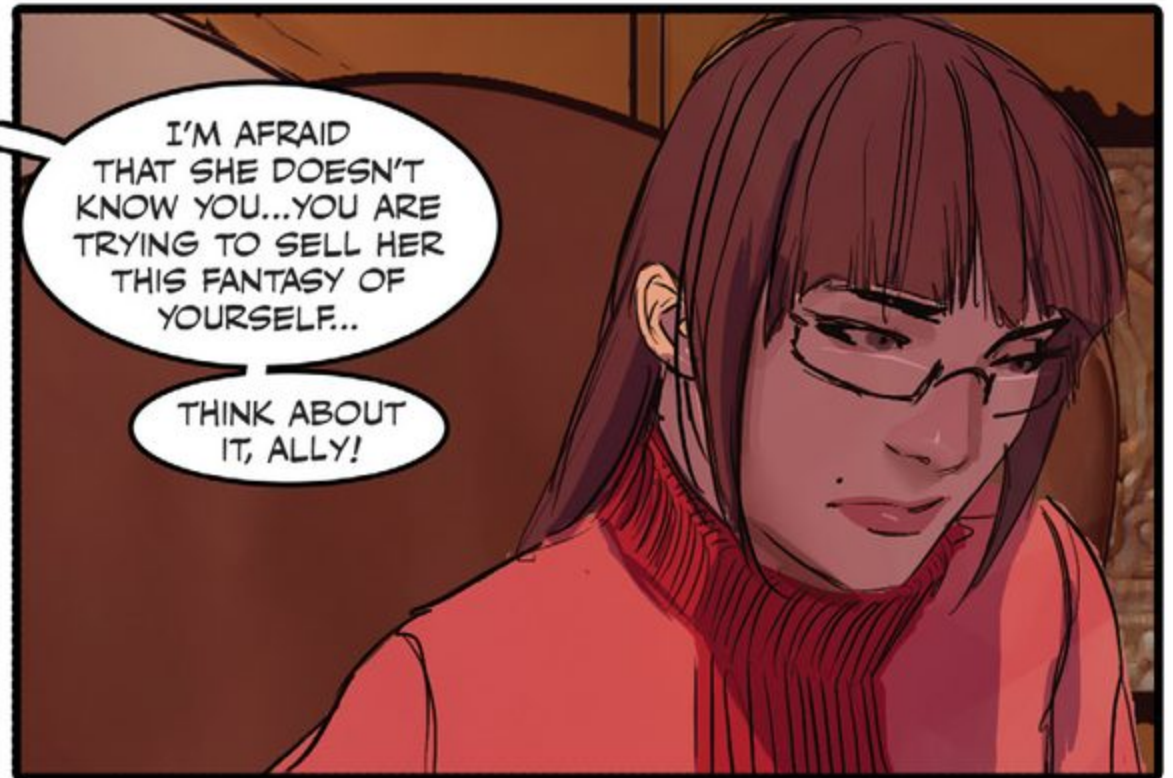


LISTEN, ALLY...  
I KNOW YOU LIKE LISA.



I LIKE HER TOO, SHE  
IS AWESOME...BUT THINK  
ABOUT IT...

YOU SEEM TO  
BE RUSHING TOWARDS...  
FUCK, I DON'T KNOW WHAT...  
I MEAN YOU ARE ASKING  
ABOUT A FIVE THOUSAND  
DOLLAR RIG! AND THAT  
ON THE HEELS OF  
THAT BED!



I'M AFRAID  
THAT SHE DOESN'T  
KNOW YOU...YOU ARE  
TRYING TO SELL HER  
THIS FANTASY OF  
YOURSELF...

THINK ABOUT  
IT, ALLY!



YOU KNEW HER FOR  
TWO MONTHS ONLINE...  
THEN THREE WEEKS IN PERSON...  
AND YOU ASKED HER TO  
MOVE-IN.

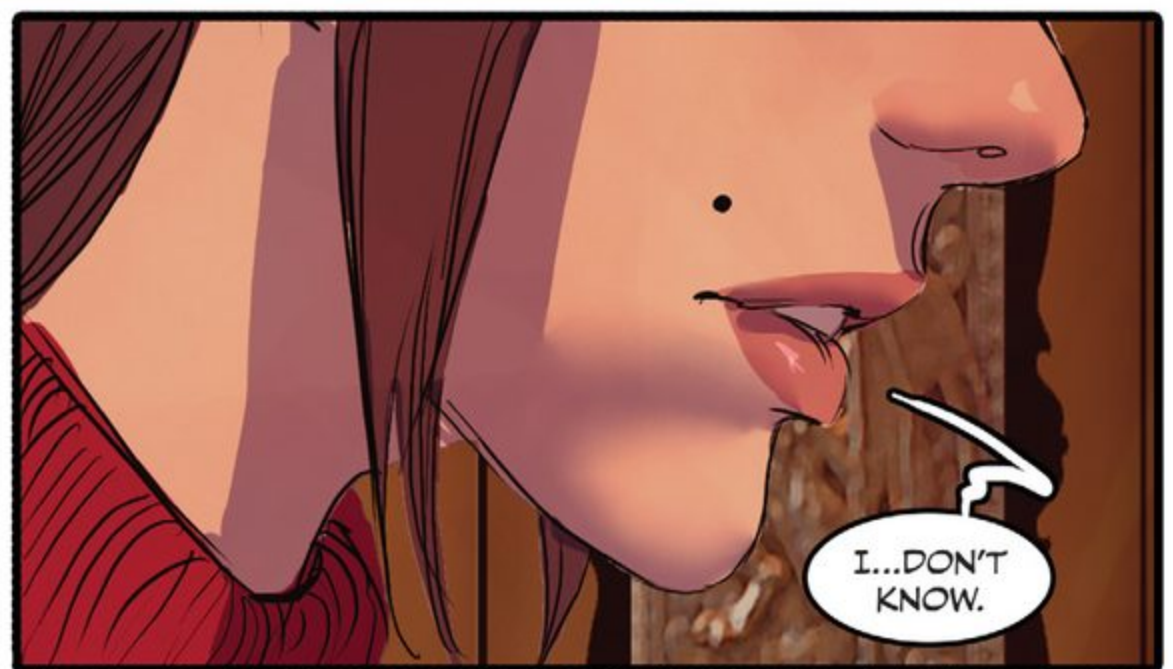
SHE IS  
PAYING  
RENT.



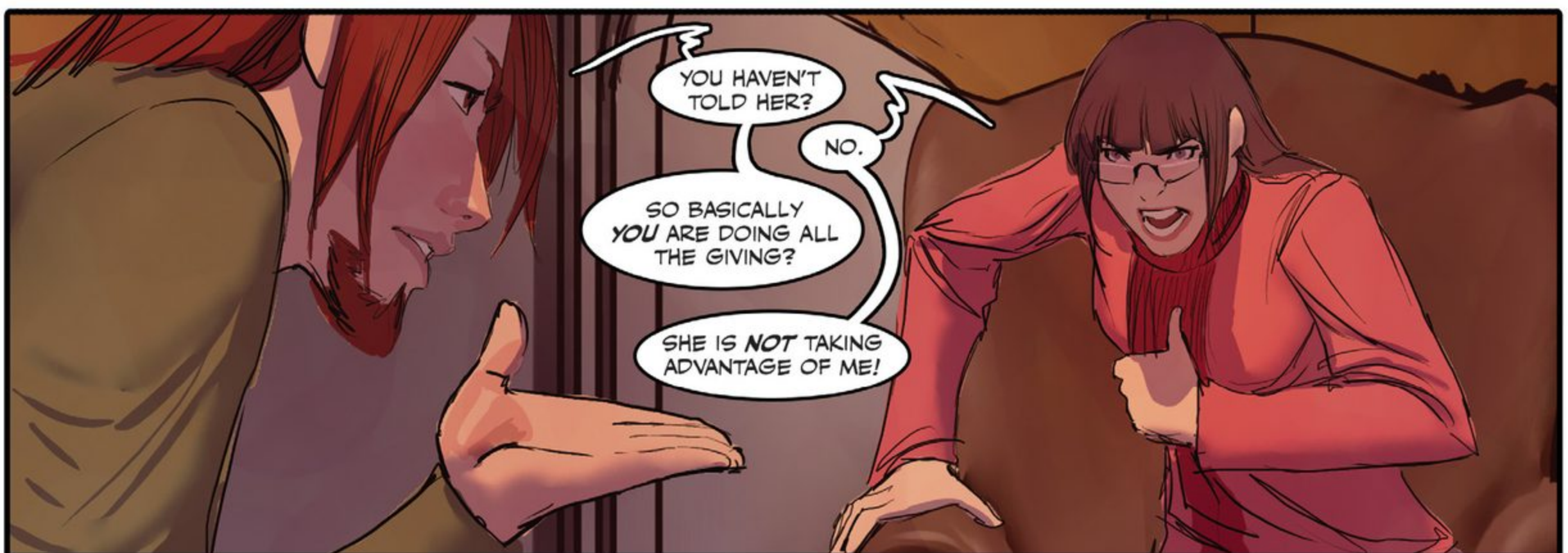
MMYEAH...

MEANWHILE,  
HERE YOU ARE, FRIGGIN'  
MAKIN' IT *RAIN!* BUYING  
EXPENSIVE GEAR YOU  
DON'T EVEN *NEED!*

I KNOW YOU HAVE  
FEELINGS FOR HER...BUT...  
DOES SHE FEEL THE  
SAME?



I...DON'T  
KNOW.



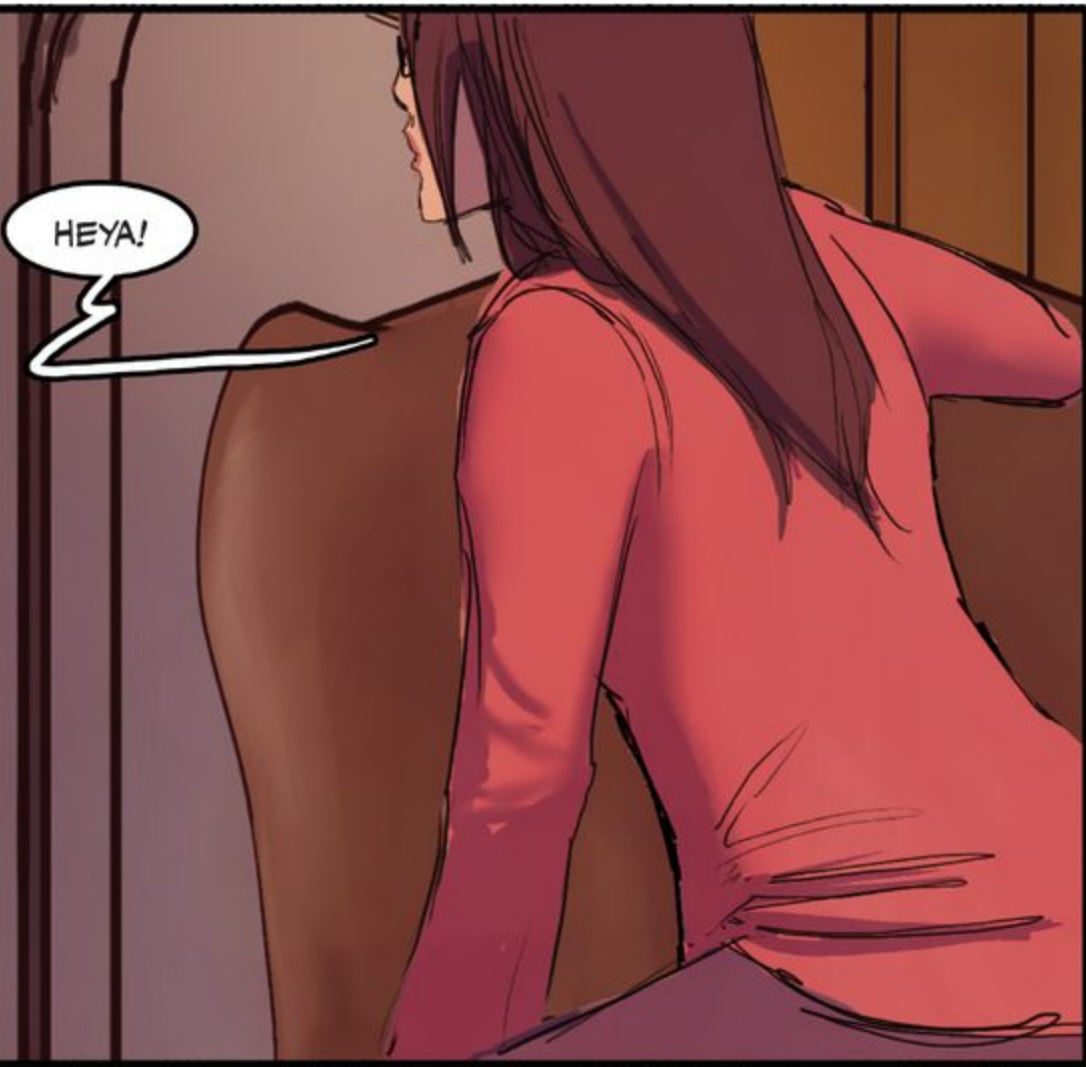
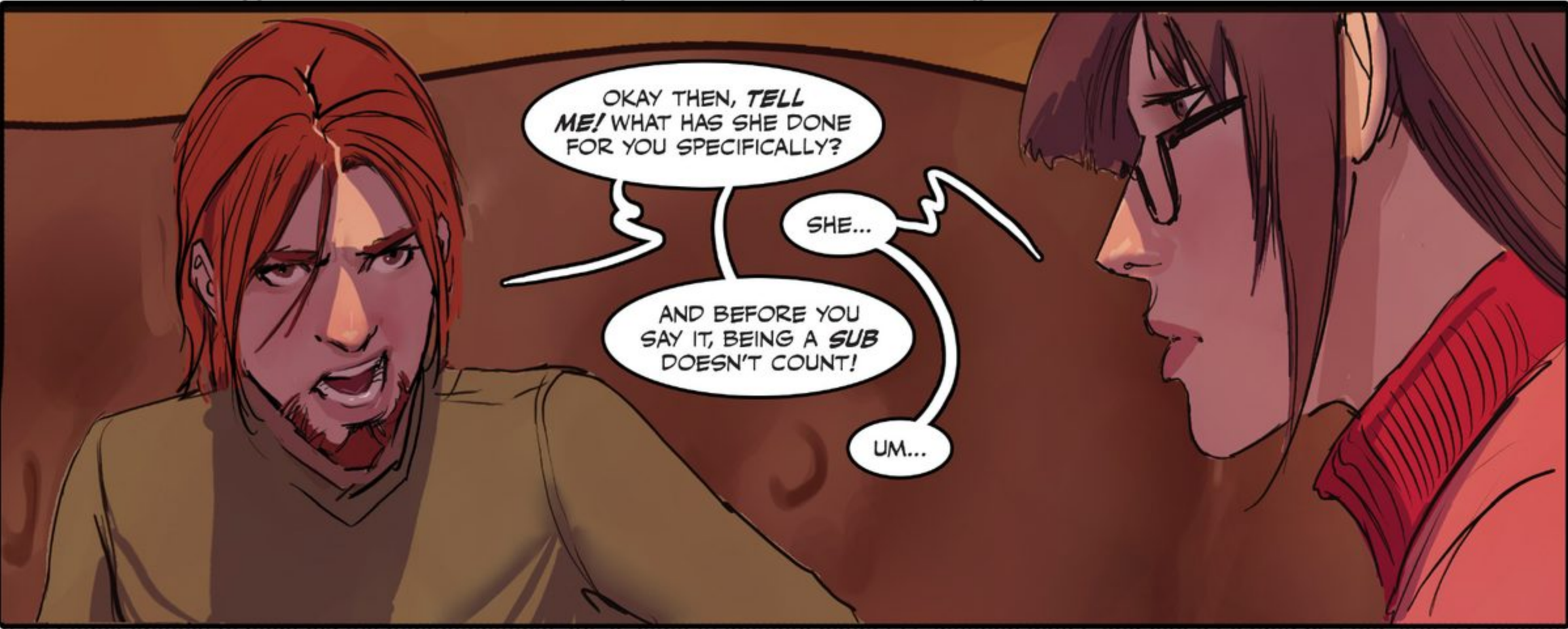
YOU HAVEN'T  
TOLD HER?

NO.

SO BASICALLY  
YOU ARE DOING ALL  
THE GIVING?

SHE IS *NOT* TAKING  
ADVANTAGE OF ME!

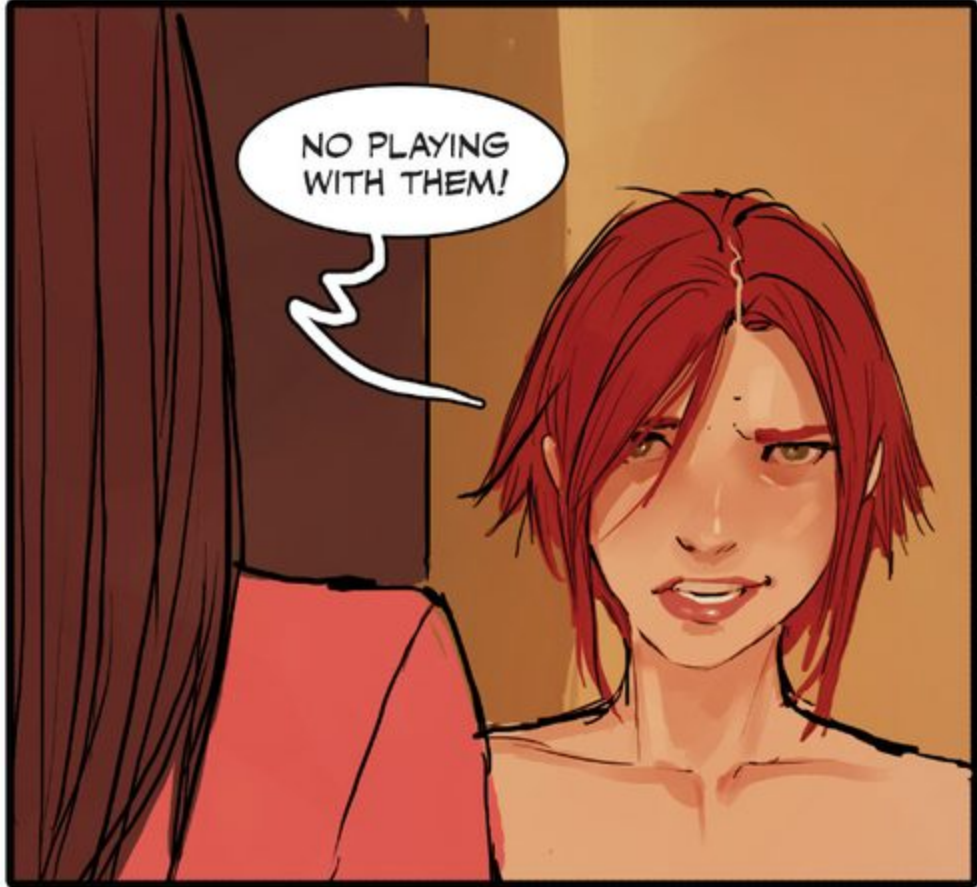
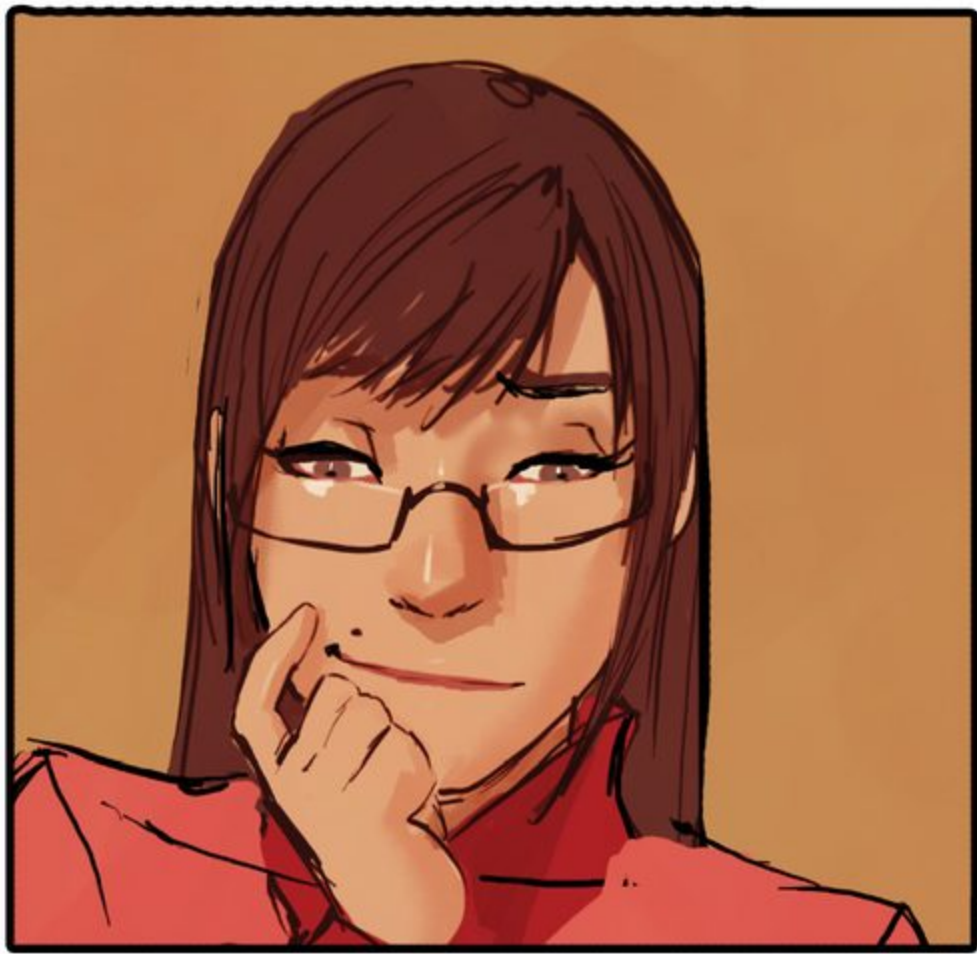












NO PLAYING  
WITH THEM!



I...WASN'T  
GONNA!



WOW...CAN'T  
BELIEVE I'M ABOUT  
TO SAY THIS...



BUT MY  
EYES ARE UP  
HERE!



MEMORIES SURE  
ARE FUNNY...

THE WAY SOME OF THEM HAVE THIS WAY OF  
POSITIVELY *ENGRAVING* THEMSELVES IN YOUR MIND.

I REMEMBER THIS  
KISS *PERFECTLY*...

THE WAY SHE HUNCHED OVER ON HER  
TIPTOES TO AVOID HURTING ME...

I REMEMBER A FLEETING THOUGHT OF HER TAKING  
QUITE A BIT OF PLEASURE IN HURTING THOSE SAME  
NIPPLES ON OTHER OCCASIONS...

NOT *THAT* DAY.

EVEN THOUGH HER LITTLE PIERCED  
NIPPLE FETISH WAS SEXUAL IN NATURE.

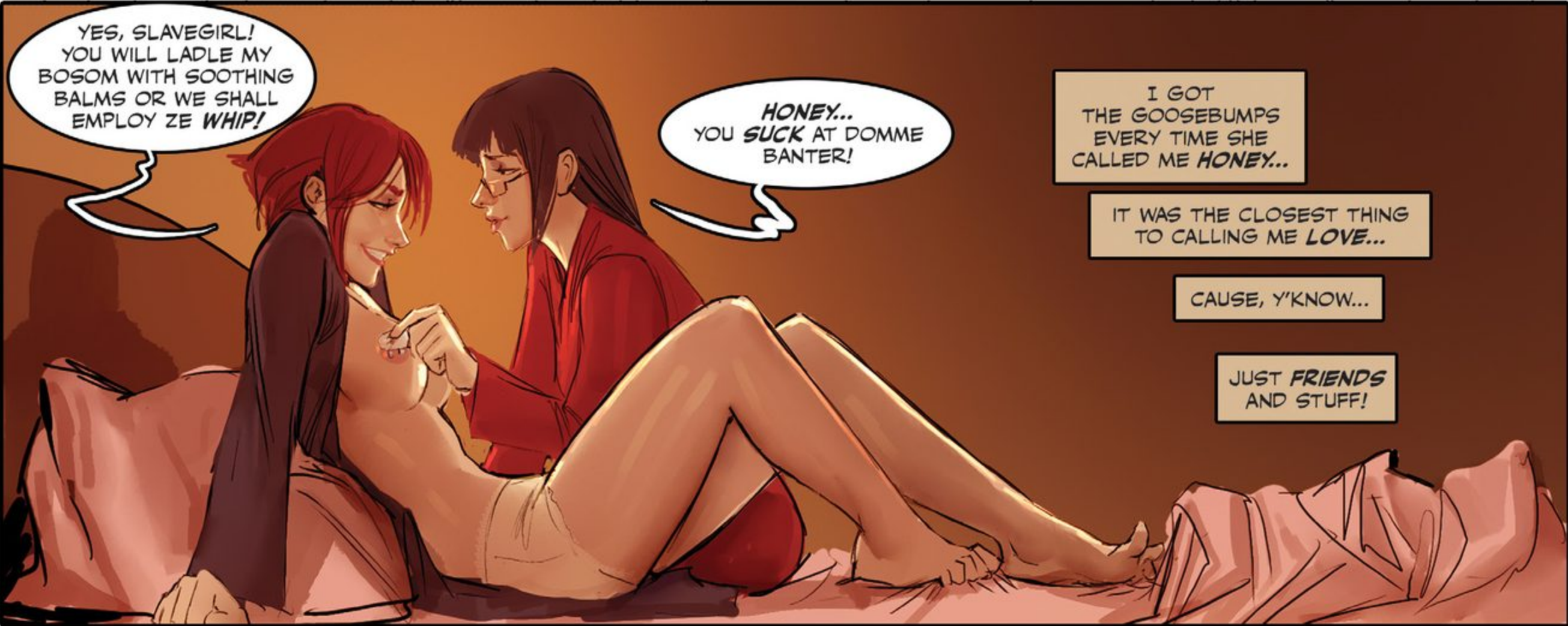
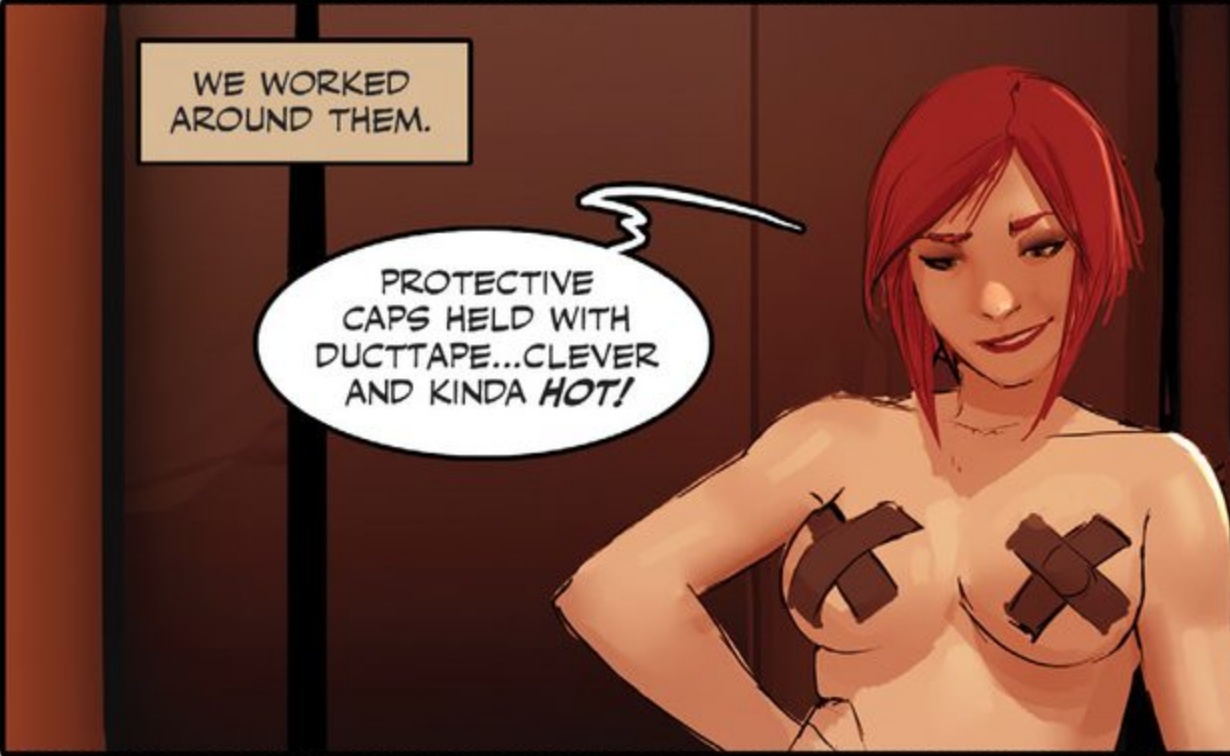
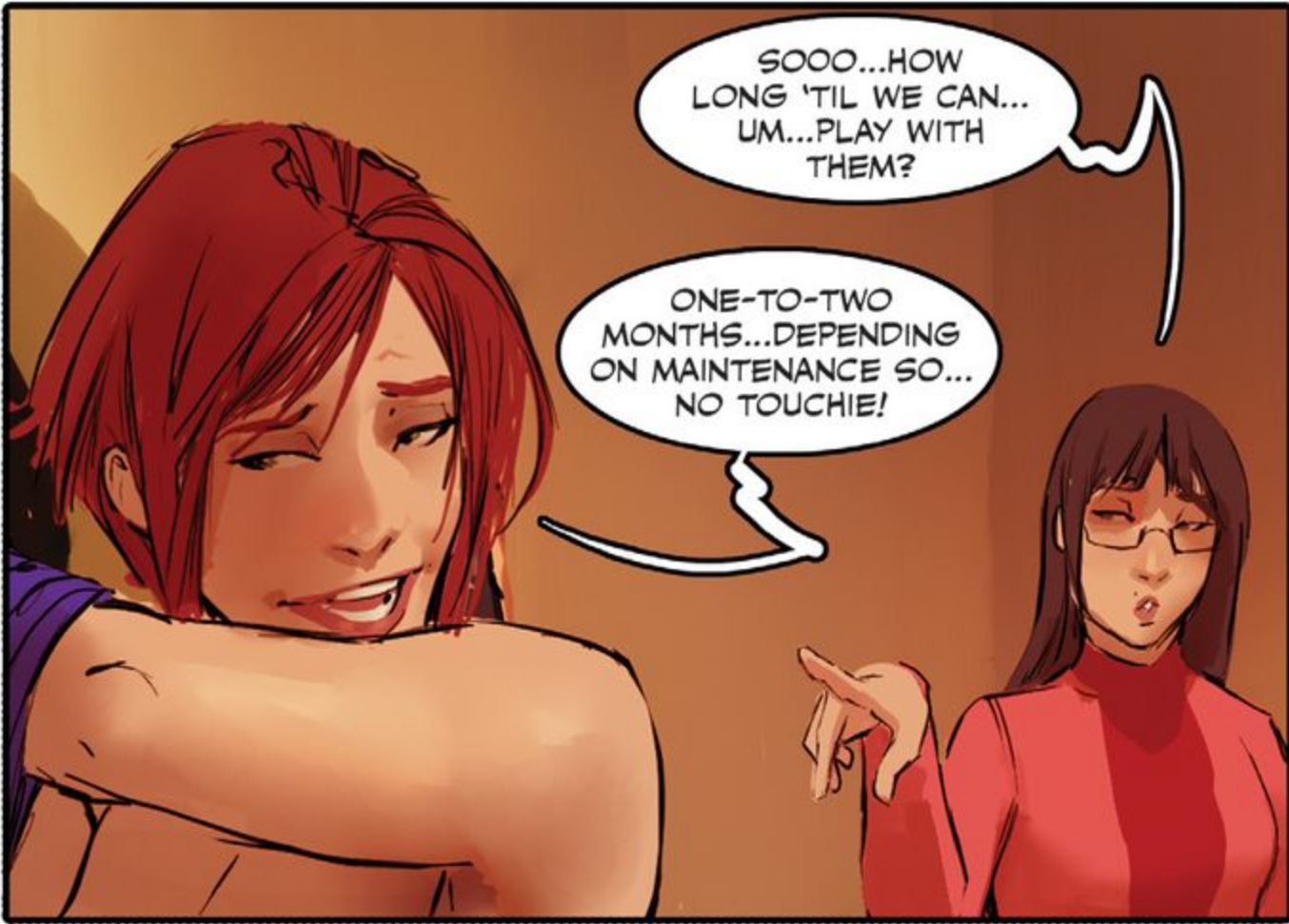
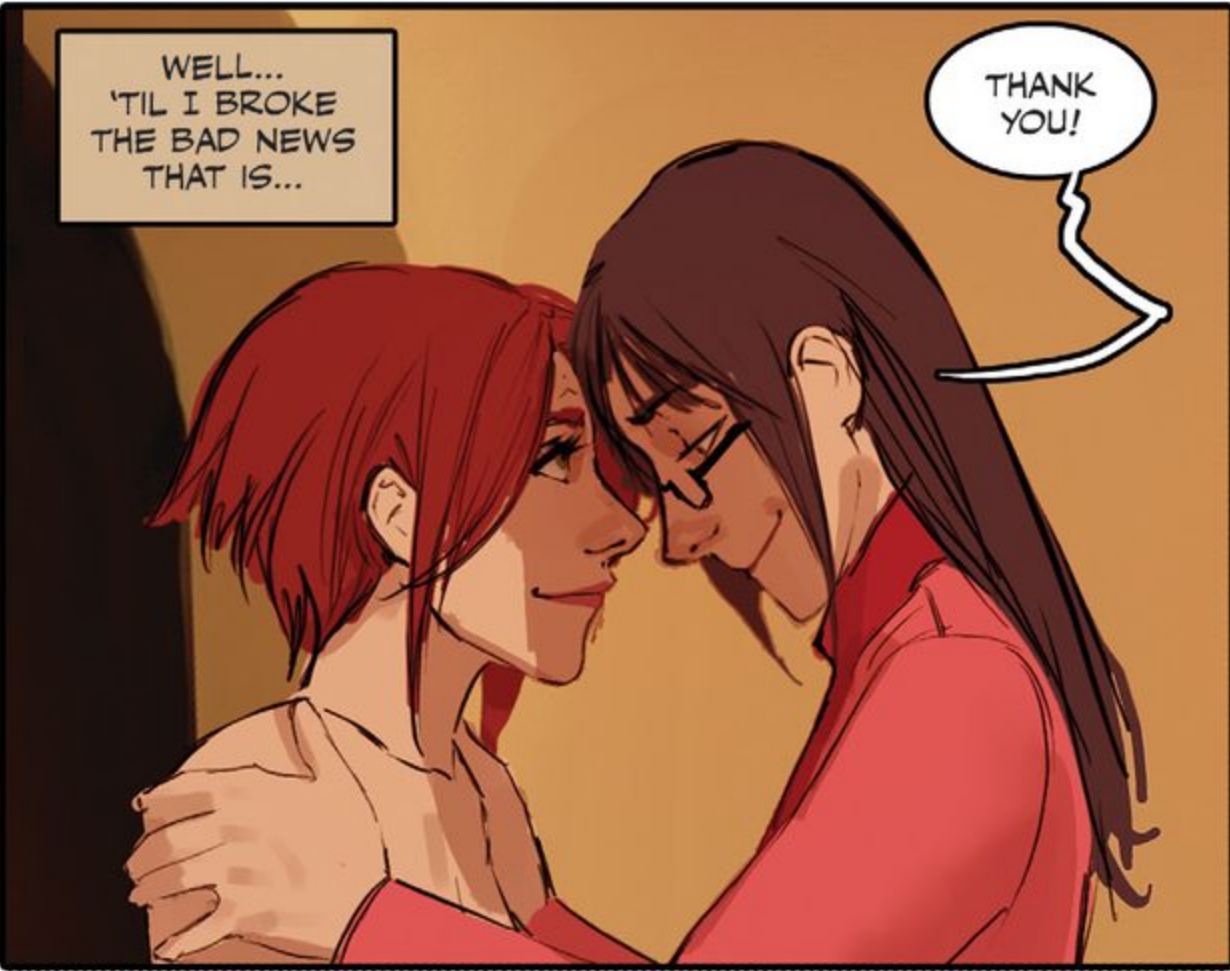
HER GRATITUDE THAT  
DAY WAS ANYTHING BUT.

I KNEW NOTHING OF HER TALK  
WITH ALAN...OF HER FEARS  
AND DOUBTS...

I KNEW SHE WAS  
HAPPY JUST THEN...

AND THAT  
WAS ENOUGH.





I GOT THE GOOSEBUMPS EVERY TIME SHE CALLED ME *HONEY*...

IT WAS THE CLOSEST THING TO CALLING ME *LOVE*...

CAUSE, Y'KNOW...

JUST *FRIENDS* AND STUFF!





OKAY...***STORYTIME!*** A FEW YEARS AGO, MY FRIEND CHRISTINE HAD A FRIEND, ROBERT.

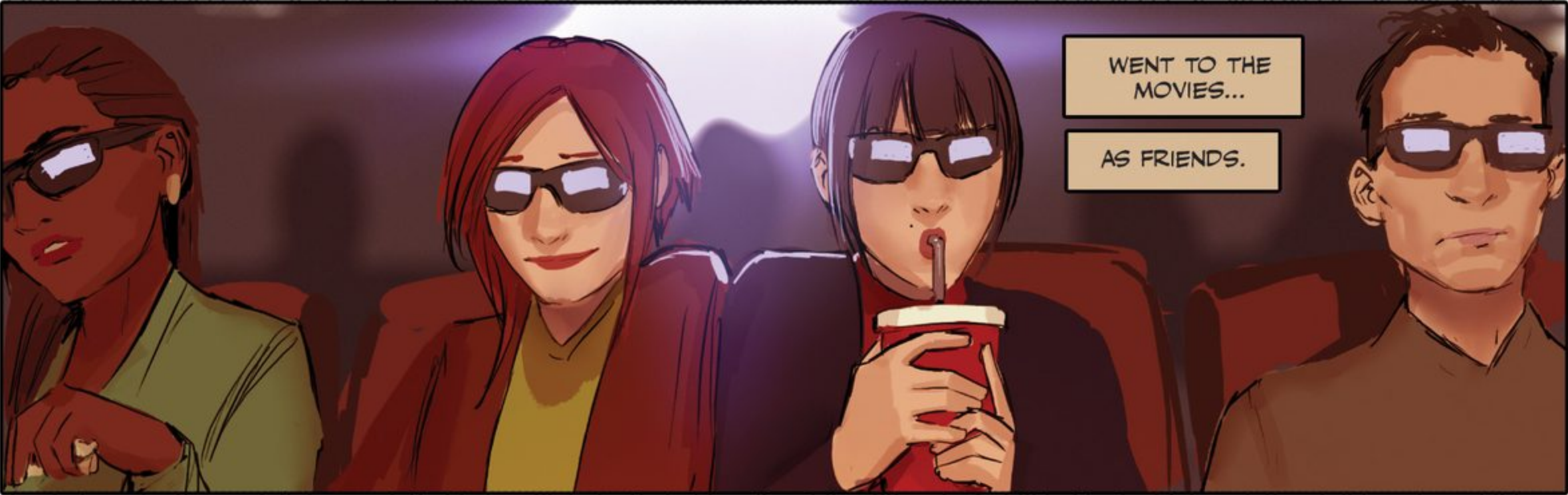
NO, THIS IS NOT ONE OF THOSE FAKE "***FRIEND O'MINE***" STORIES JUST...READ ON...

SO EVERYONE AND THEIR GRANDMOTHER SAW THAT THEY HAD FALLEN FOR EACH OTHER.



THEY WERE TOGETHER ALL THE DAMN TIME...

AS FRIENDS.



WENT TO THE MOVIES...

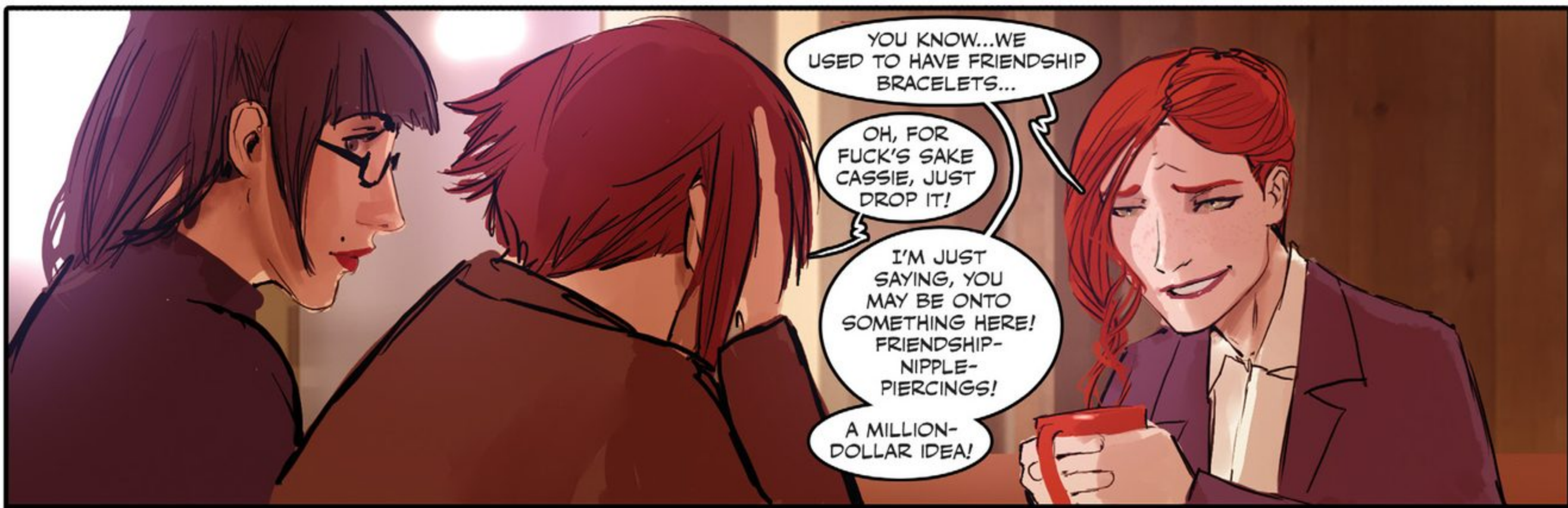
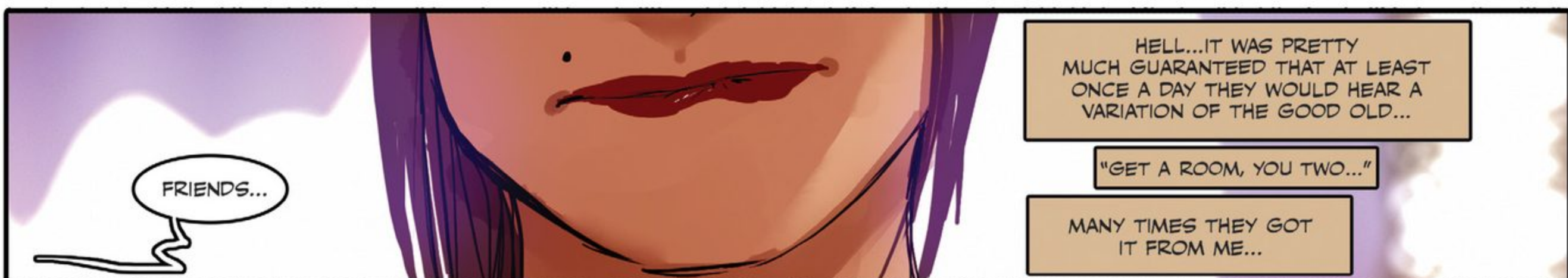
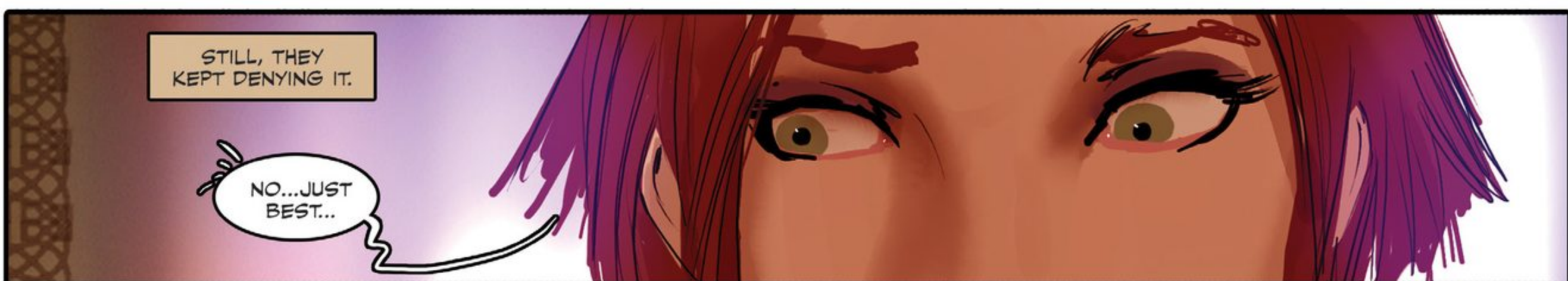
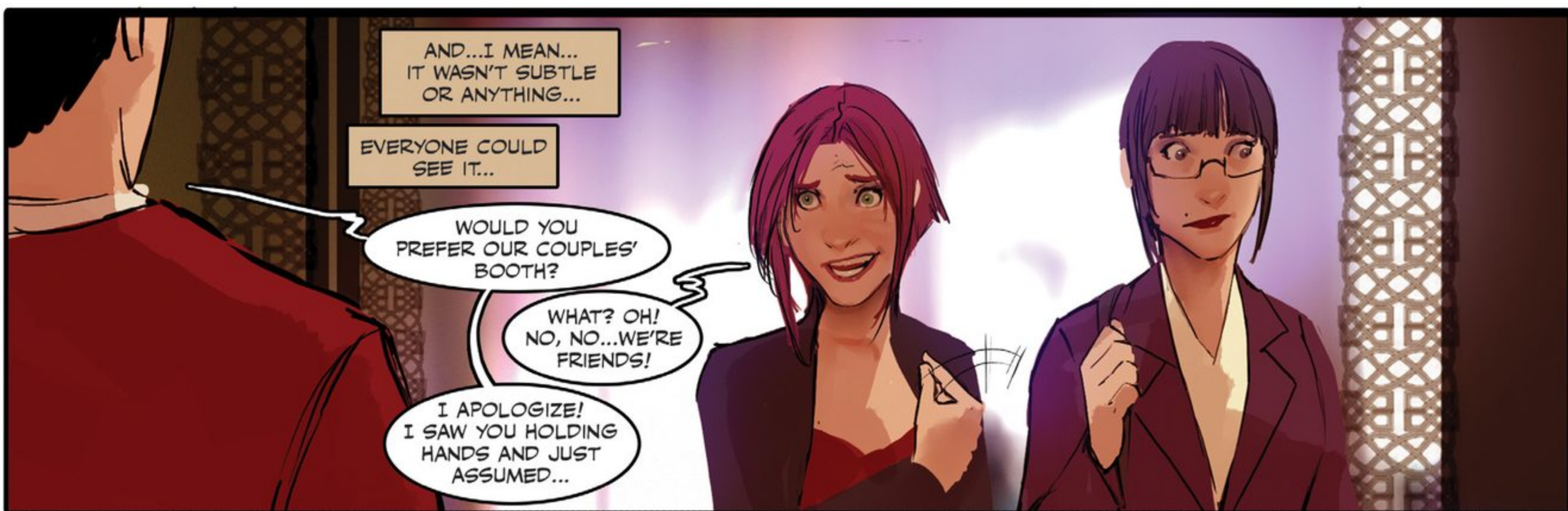
AS FRIENDS.



FREQUENTED RESTAURANTS...

AS FRIENDS.







AND ALLY WAS  
MERELY PLOWING  
ME IN THE *FRIENDLIEST*  
OF WAYS...



YUP...SHE AND I  
TURNED A SIMPLE THING INTO  
AN EMOTIONAL VERSION  
OF THE *GORDIAN KNOT*...



US BEING INTO  
BONDAGE, I THOUGHT  
IT WAS AN APT  
METAPHOR.

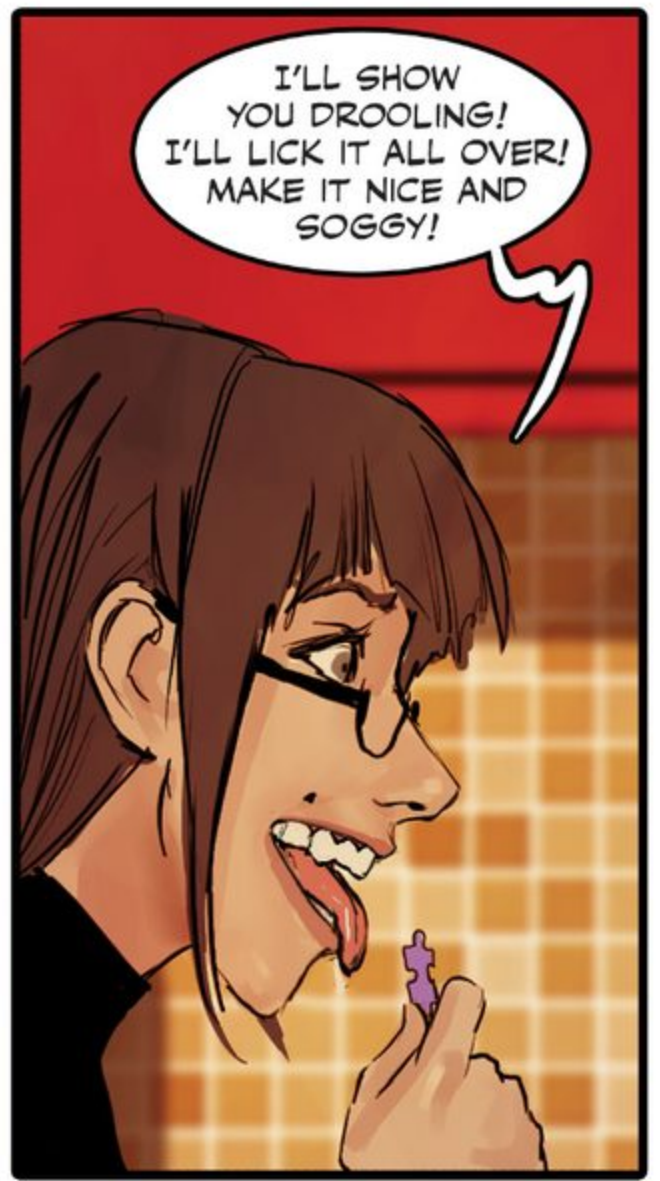


THANKFULLY...A CERTAIN  
BLONDE WOULD BRING A *SWORD*  
ALONG AND SOLVE OUR LITTLE KNOT  
PROBLEM ONCE AND FOR ALL.

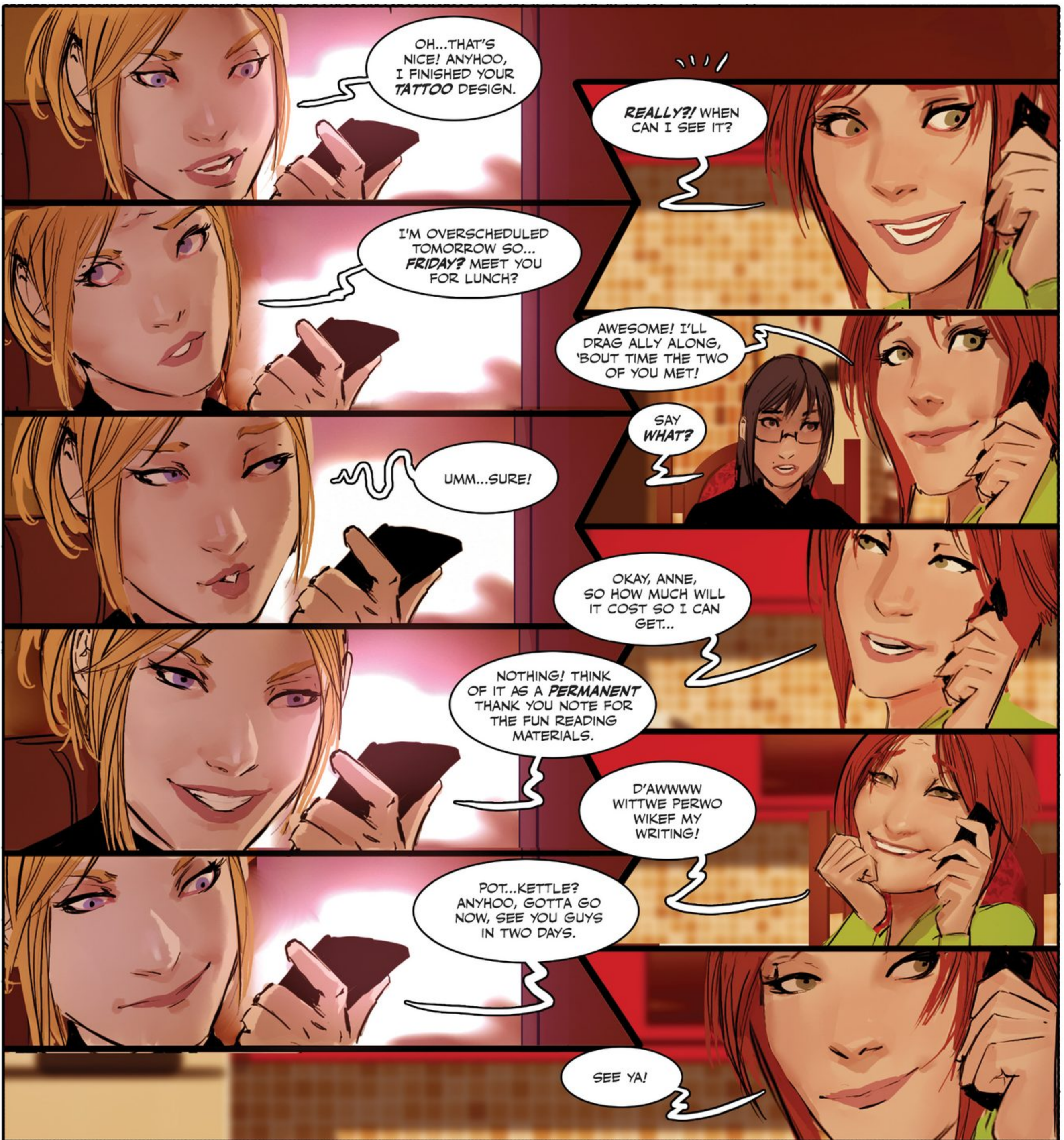
THIS SHOULD  
DO NICELY...



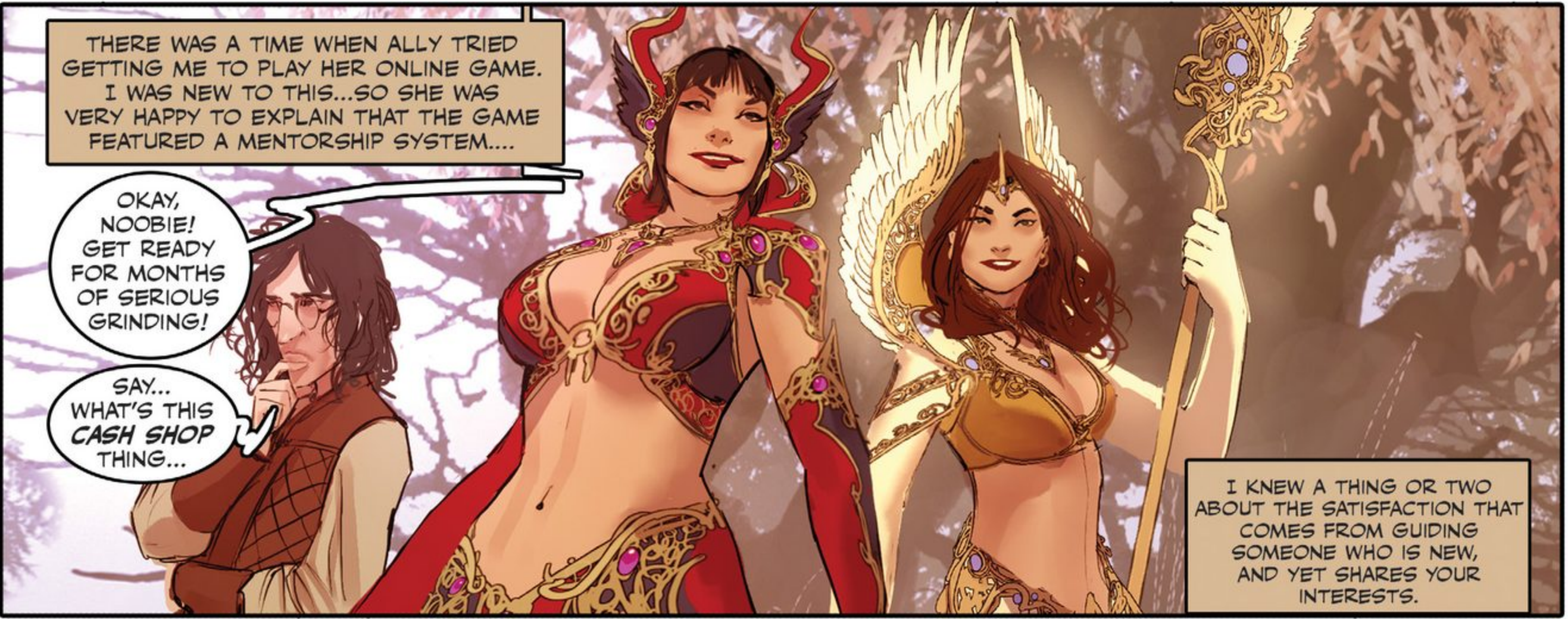










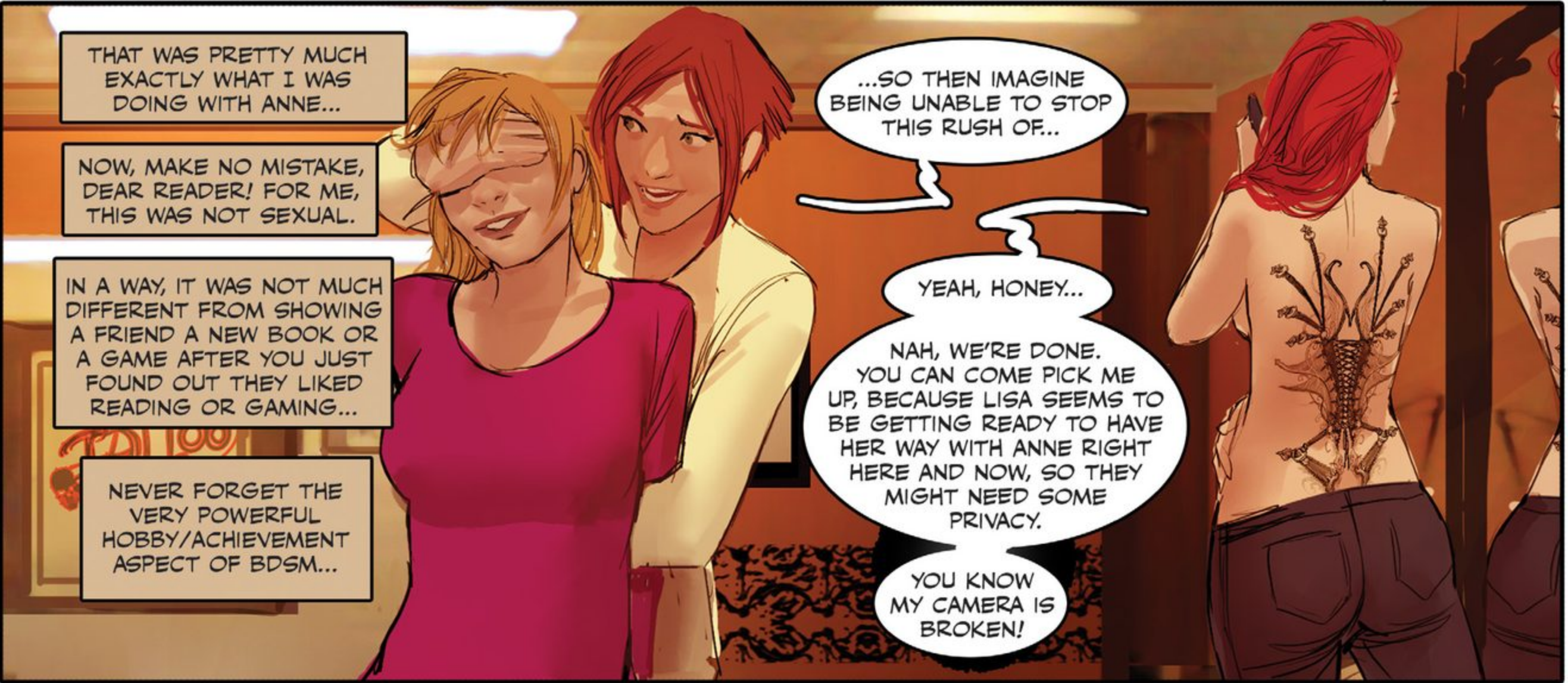


THERE WAS A TIME WHEN ALLY TRIED GETTING ME TO PLAY HER ONLINE GAME. I WAS NEW TO THIS...SO SHE WAS VERY HAPPY TO EXPLAIN THAT THE GAME FEATURED A MENTORSHIP SYSTEM....

OKAY, NOOBIE! GET READY FOR MONTHS OF SERIOUS GRINDING!

SAY... WHAT'S THIS CASH SHOP THING...

I KNEW A THING OR TWO ABOUT THE SATISFACTION THAT COMES FROM GUIDING SOMEONE WHO IS NEW, AND YET SHARES YOUR INTERESTS.



THAT WAS PRETTY MUCH EXACTLY WHAT I WAS DOING WITH ANNE...

NOW, MAKE NO MISTAKE, DEAR READER! FOR ME, THIS WAS NOT SEXUAL.

IN A WAY, IT WAS NOT MUCH DIFFERENT FROM SHOWING A FRIEND A NEW BOOK OR A GAME AFTER YOU JUST FOUND OUT THEY LIKED READING OR GAMING...

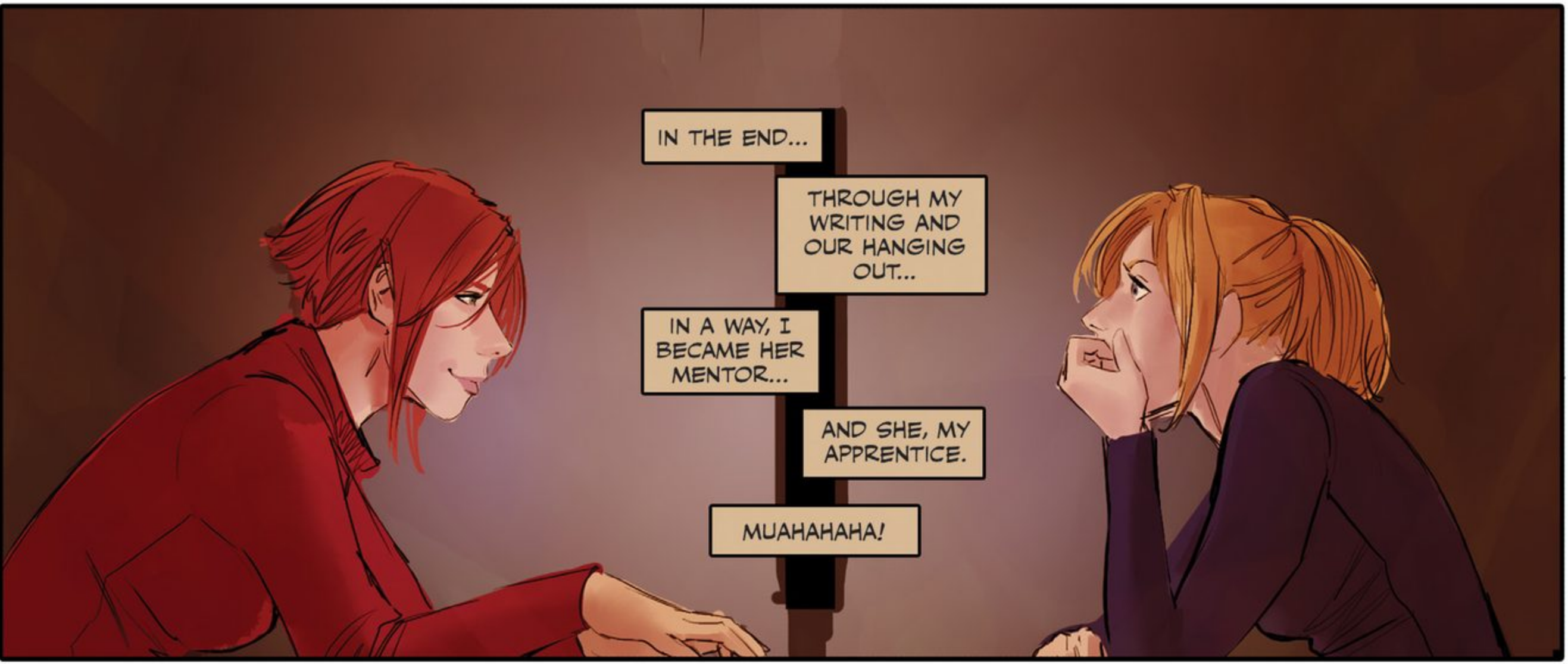
NEVER FORGET THE VERY POWERFUL HOBBY/ACHIEVEMENT ASPECT OF BDSM...

...SO THEN IMAGINE BEING UNABLE TO STOP THIS RUSH OF...

YEAH, HONEY...

NAH, WE'RE DONE. YOU CAN COME PICK ME UP, BECAUSE LISA SEEMS TO BE GETTING READY TO HAVE HER WAY WITH ANNE RIGHT HERE AND NOW, SO THEY MIGHT NEED SOME PRIVACY.

YOU KNOW MY CAMERA IS BROKEN!



IN THE END...

THROUGH MY WRITING AND OUR HANGING OUT...

IN A WAY, I BECAME HER MENTOR...

AND SHE, MY APPRENTICE.

MUAHAHAHA!



AHEM...ANYWAY, I COULDN'T JUST LET HER DO THIS TATTOO FOR NOTHING.



SO THAT EVENING, WHILE ALLY WAS BRAVING IMAGINARY WORLDS WITH AN OCCASIONAL FUCKING NOOB SCREAM ECHOING THE HALLWAY...

I WAS PONDERING...





AND THEN...

IT *HIT* ME!



I KNOW YOU SAID YOU'LL DO  
THE TATTOO FOR FREE...BUT  
I STILL FEEL LIKE I SHOULD  
DO SOMETHING FOR YOU AS  
WELL..

SO HOW WOULD YOU LIKE IF I  
USED YOU FOR ONE OF MY  
STORIES?

OF COURSE, YOU WOULD GET  
ALL THE VETO POWER AND  
EDITORIAL CONTROL AS WELL  
AS FIRST READING PRIVILEGE!



GET TO TYPING!



AND SO I DID!

KRA-  
KA-  
KRI-  
KA-  
KRICK-  
RAKK



IT WAS ACTUALLY FUNNY.  
I ASKED THIS SAME QUESTION  
TO ALLY A COUPLE OF  
MONTHS EARLIER.





HEY ALLY...HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF I USED YOU AS THE DOMINATRIX IN MY NEXT STORY? OF COURSE, YOU WOULD BE THE FIRST TO READ IT...AND IF YOU SAY NO, THAT WILL BE THE END OF THAT, NO POSTING.

:)



START TYPING! BEFORE I GET MY PADDLE... XD



YES, MISTRESS! :P

THAT WAS HOW THE FIRST OF MANY STORIES OF ALLISON AND LISBETH STARTED...

IN THESE STORIES I HAVE SHOWN THE ALLY OF MY DESIRES...DOMINANT, POWERFUL, GORGEOUS, AND WILD...

SHE WAS THE ALLY I WANTED...THE ALLY I LUSTED FOR...AND, EVENTUALLY, I MET THAT ALLY FACE-TO-FACE.

I FELT HER TOUCHES AND SCRATCHES... HER KISSES AND BITES...

THIS WAS THE ALLY I *WROTE* ABOUT.

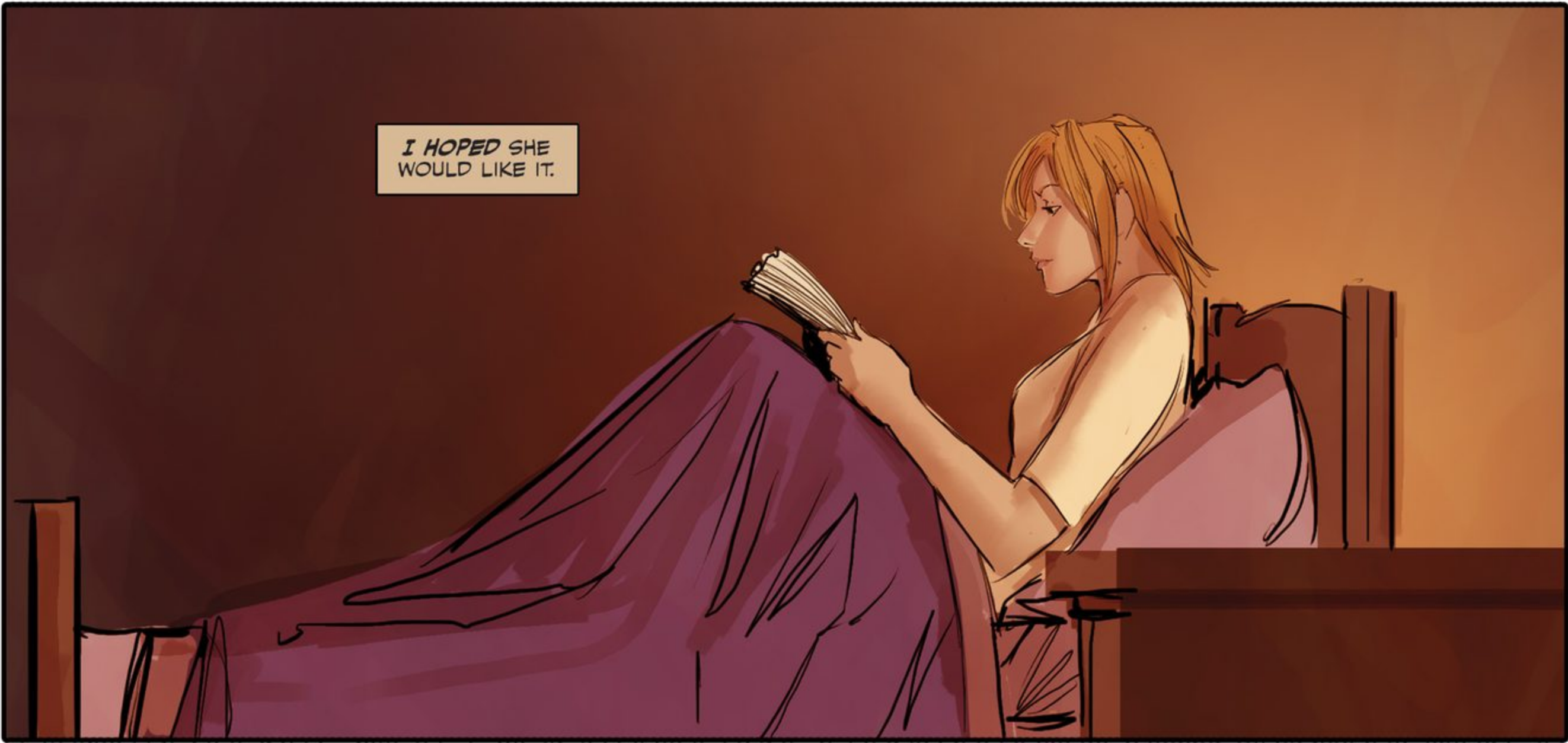
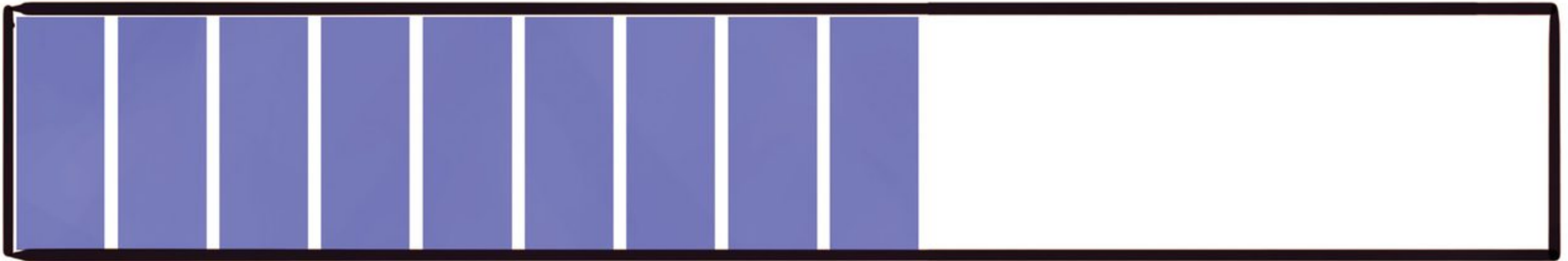
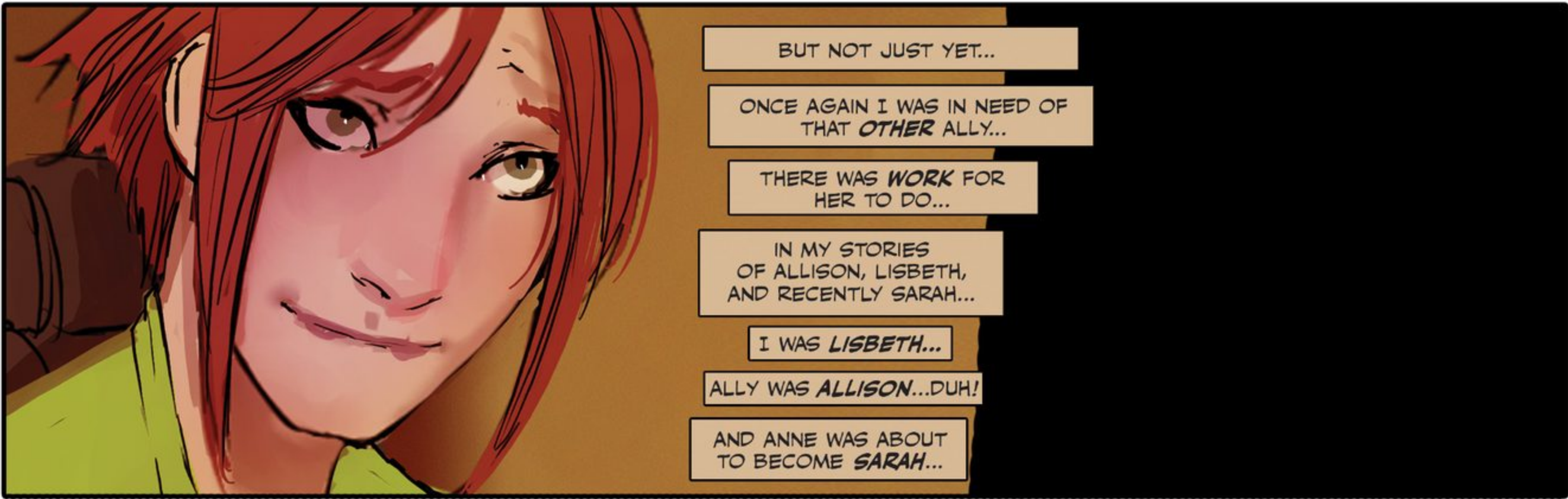
THIS, HOWEVER, WAS NOT THE ALLY I WAS FALLING IN LOVE WITH...

NO. *THAT* ALLY WAS A *DUMBASS* STICKING PUZZLES TO HER FOREHEAD.

I *WANTED* TO TELL THAT DUMBASS HOW MUCH I LOVED HER...









OKAY!

A. CARVER

RELAX, ANNE! THIS IS NOT A SITUATION YOU CAN CONTROL. AT THIS POINT, BASICALLY THE WORST THING SHE CAN SAY IS *NO*.

WELL...THAT'S JUST NOT TRUE. SHE CAN GO *FAR* BEYOND A SIMPLE "NO."

HOW *DARE* YOU IMPOSE?

ARE YOU FUCKING *INSANE*?

WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU???

ALL LEGITIMATE POSSIBILITIES AND YET I'M NOT LEAVING.

WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH ME? WHY AM I *STILL* HERE???

AND YET HERE I AM, READY TO RELINQUISH ALL CONTROL. HOPING THIS WOMAN I ONLY MET ONCE WOULD TAKE IT AWAY FROM ME!

SUBDUE ME. TAKE ME! NO STRESS, NO PRESSURE JUST HELPLESS ECSTASY.

HEH! IT FEELS LIKE I GOT A STORM IN MY STOMACH...THAT'S...NEW.

USUALLY IT'S JUST SHOVELLED ANGER BEHIND MY FAKE SMILES, A BIG OL' KNOT OF CYNICISM...

BUT THIS...*EXCITEMENT*. I'VE *NEVER* FELT LIKE THIS.

I SHOULD GO! JUST *LEAVE* AND *FORGET* ABOUT IT ALL!

AND, I *WOULD*...BUT HER DAMN SMILE... THAT GIRL, LISBETH'S, SMILE. SHE WAS BRANDED WITH THAT TATTOO, AND YET, SHE WAS GENUINELY HAPPY.

I WANTED THAT...

I STILL DO.

**KNOCK KNOCK**

IT'S OPEN!

UMM...HI THERE! I'M NOT SURE IF YOU REMEMBER ME...

YOU'RE ANNE, RIGHT? YOU DID THAT LOVELY TATTOO FOR MY LISBETH!

YEAH...THAT'S ACTUALLY WHY I'M HERE. I WAS KINDA WONDERING IF I COULD TAKE A PHOTO OF IT? IT SHOULD HAVE HEALED BY NOW.

OH, YES, IT HEALED QUITE NICELY. IF YOU WANT, I CAN EMAIL YOU SOME PHOTOS...

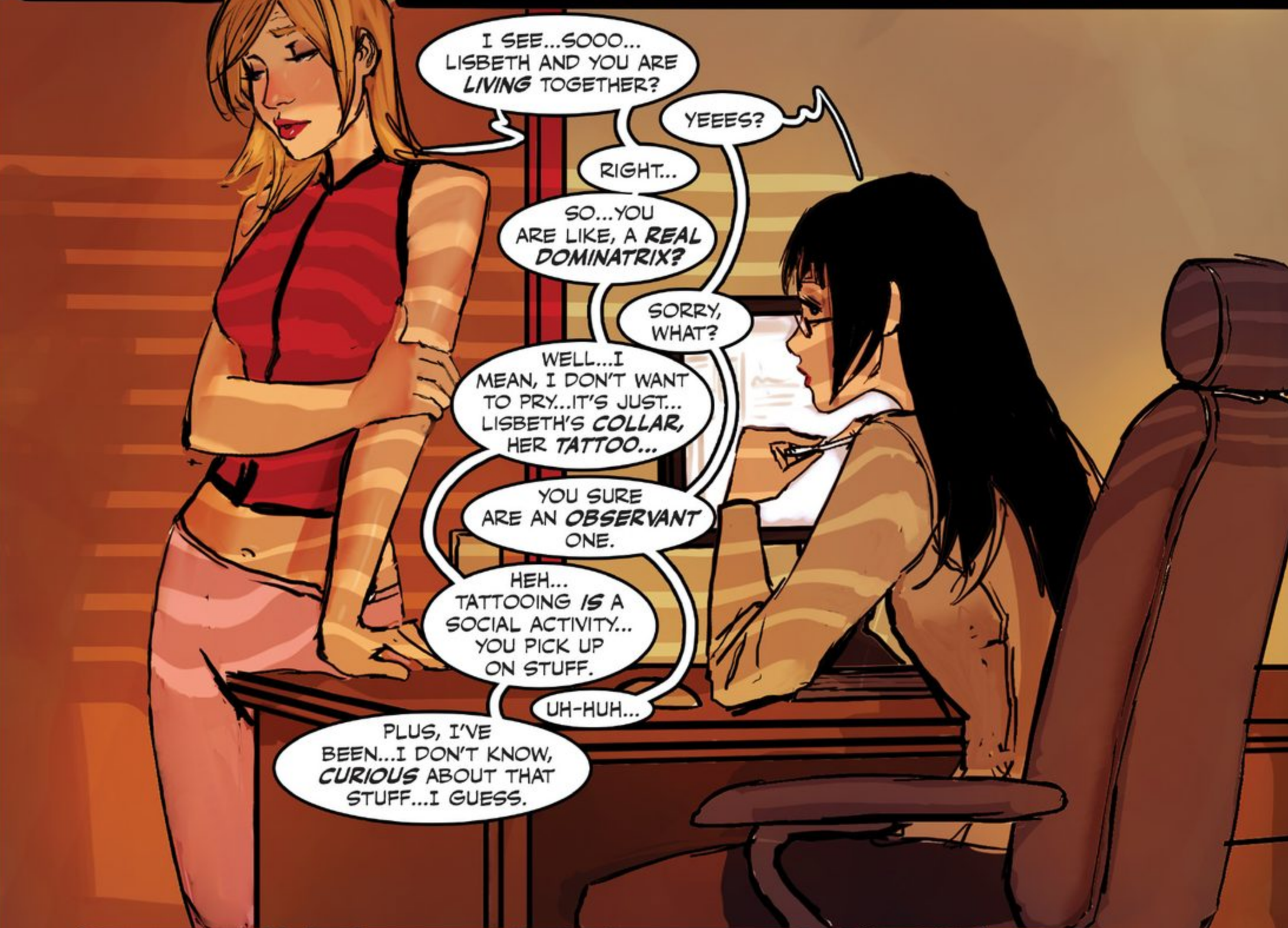
YEAH, UM...ACTUALLY, MY COMPUTER IS BEING REPAIRED... UM, WHICH IS WHY I CAME *IN PERSON*...

I FIGURED IT WOULD HAVE BEEN *AWKWARD* IF I JUST CAME OVER TO YOUR HOME.





DON'T BE SILLY,  
MY LOVELY *LISBETH* WOULD  
HAVE LET YOU IN, AND  
HELPED YOU  
OUT *GLADLY!*



I SEE...SOOO...  
LISBETH AND YOU ARE  
*LIVING* TOGETHER?

YEEES?

RIGHT...

SO...YOU  
ARE LIKE, A *REAL*  
*DOMINATRIX?*

SORRY,  
WHAT?

WELL...I  
MEAN, I DON'T WANT  
TO PRY...IT'S JUST...  
LISBETH'S *COLLAR*,  
HER *TATTOO*...

YOU SURE  
ARE AN *OBSERVANT*  
ONE.

HEH...  
TATTOOING *IS* A  
SOCIAL ACTIVITY...  
YOU PICK UP  
ON STUFF.

UH-HUH...

PLUS, I'VE  
BEEN...I DON'T KNOW,  
*CURIOUS* ABOUT THAT  
STUFF...I GUESS.



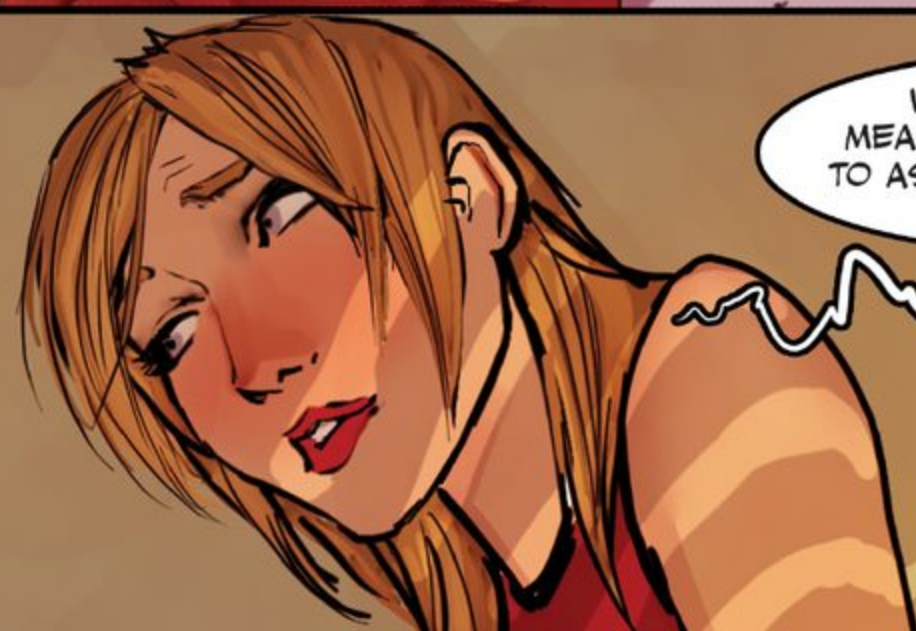
HOLD THE  
PHONE...WHAT  
DO WE HAVE  
HERE?

ANNE...



THERE IS  
NO WAY...

WHY DID YOU  
REALLY COME  
HERE?



W-WHAT DO YOU  
MEAN? I...I JUST CAME  
TO ASK ABOUT LISBETH'S  
TATTOO.

ARE YOU SURE?

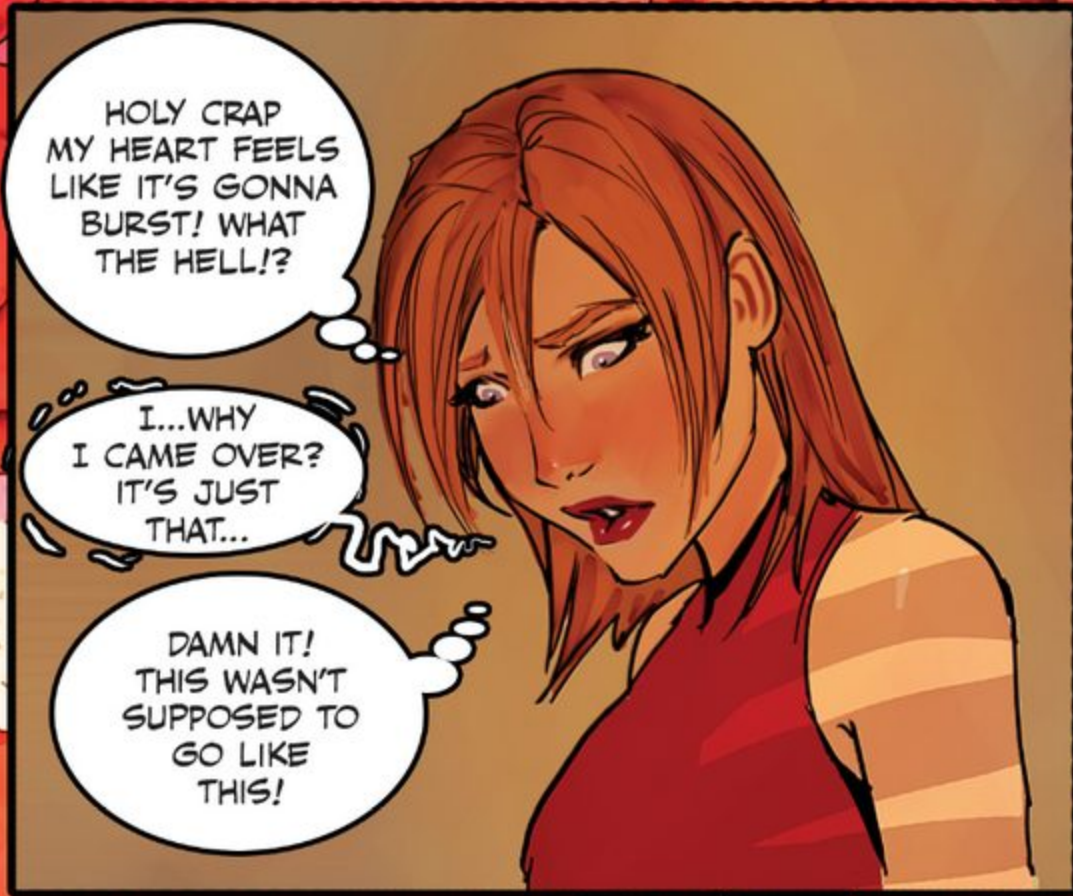
WELL...I...





ANNE...  
IT SEEMS TO  
ME THAT YOU CAME  
HERE LOOKING FOR  
SOMETHING...COULD  
IT BE THAT OUR LITTLE...  
COMMISSION LEFT YOU  
WANTING FOR A  
MORE...LONG TERM  
COOPERATION?

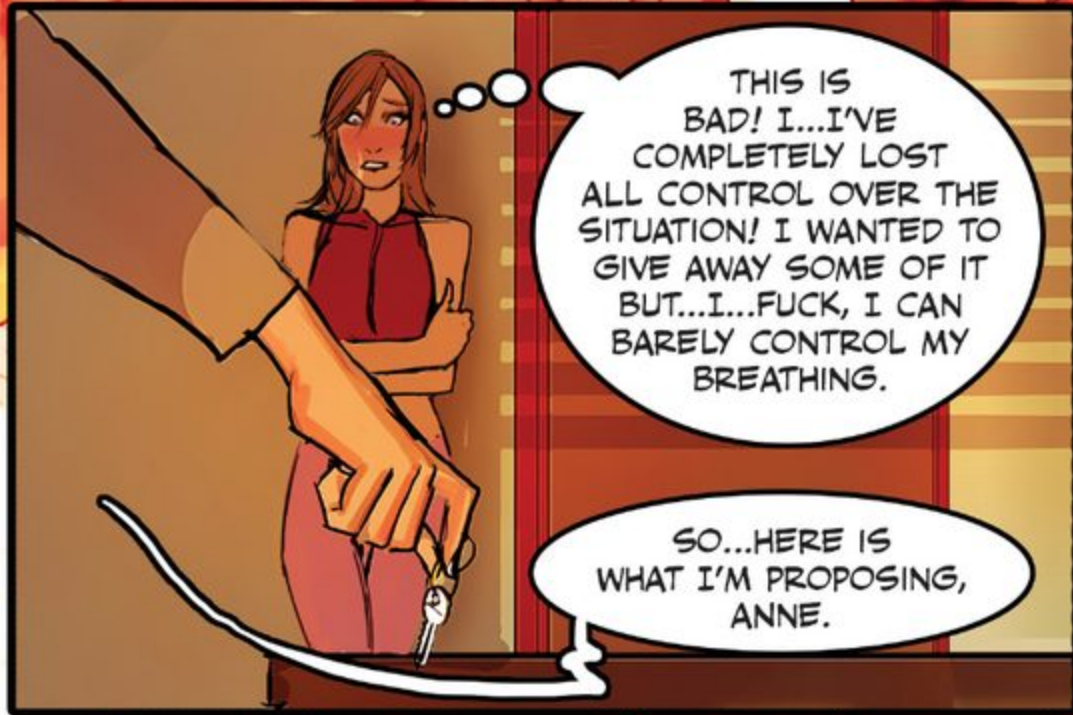
W...WHAT?



HOLY CRAP  
MY HEART FEELS  
LIKE IT'S GONNA  
BURST! WHAT  
THE HELL!?

I...WHY  
I CAME OVER?  
IT'S JUST  
THAT...

DAMN IT!  
THIS WASN'T  
SUPPOSED TO  
GO LIKE  
THIS!



THIS IS  
BAD! I...I'VE  
COMPLETELY LOST  
ALL CONTROL OVER THE  
SITUATION! I WANTED TO  
GIVE AWAY SOME OF IT  
BUT...I...FUCK, I CAN  
BARELY CONTROL MY  
BREATHING.

SO...HERE IS  
WHAT I'M PROPOSING,  
ANNE.



I WILL START  
COUNTING DOWN FROM  
**FIVE**. AFTER I'M DONE, I'M  
**LOCKING** THE OFFICE DOOR.  
FROM THEN ON, EVERYTHING  
AND **EVERYONE** IN THIS  
OFFICE BELONGS  
TO **ME**. SO...

FIVE...

W-WAIT...

FOUR...

NO...THIS...  
IT'S ALL WRONG SHE  
IS **PLAYING** WITH ME  
I...I'M **BETTER**  
THAN THIS.



THREE...

MY GOD...  
I...I'M NOT LEAVING!  
WHY AM I NOT LEAVING?  
I CAN BARELY BREATHE  
AND YET...I'M...  
**STAYING!**

TWO...



ONE...

SO, THIS  
IS IT...

ZERO!

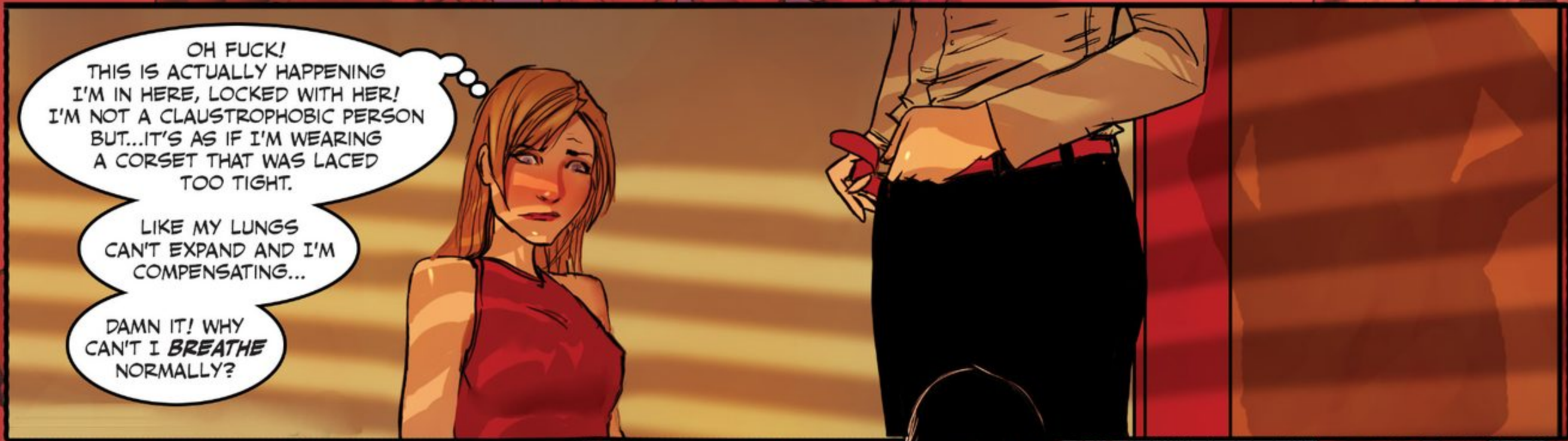
CLICK

THIS IS HOW IT STARTS...  
I AM A **MOUSE**, I GUESS.

OH, ANNE...  
WE ARE GOING TO  
HAVE **SO MUCH**  
FUN!

AND SHE  
IS THE **CAT**.





OH FUCK!  
THIS IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING  
I'M IN HERE, LOCKED WITH HER!  
I'M NOT A CLAUSTROPHOBIC PERSON  
BUT...IT'S AS IF I'M WEARING  
A CORSET THAT WAS LACED  
TOO TIGHT.

LIKE MY LUNGS  
CAN'T EXPAND AND I'M  
COMPENSATING...

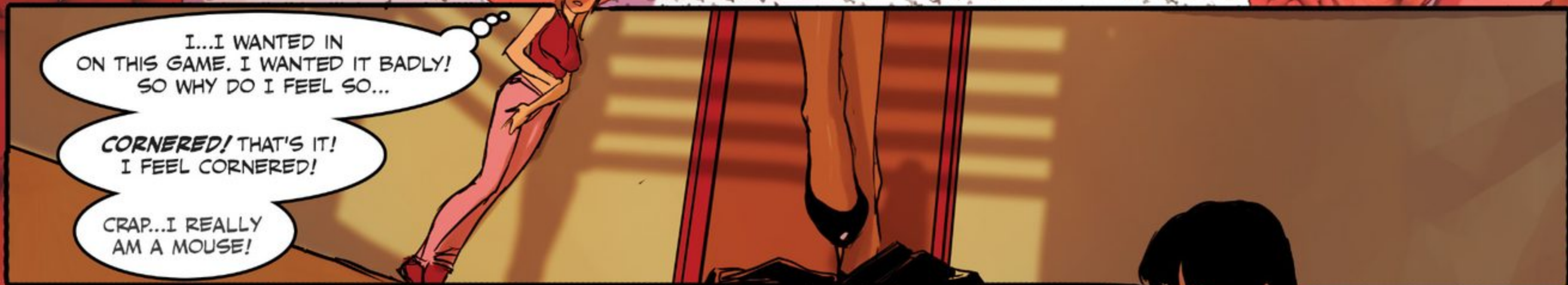
DAMN IT! WHY  
CAN'T I **BREATHE**  
NORMALLY?



START UNDRESSING,  
MY PET, THIS GAME  
WILL REQUIRE LESS  
CLOTHING.

I MEAN,  
IT'S NOT LIKE  
SHE IS **PHYSICALLY**  
THREATENING. SHE  
IS **HOT**, THAT'S  
ABOUT IT...

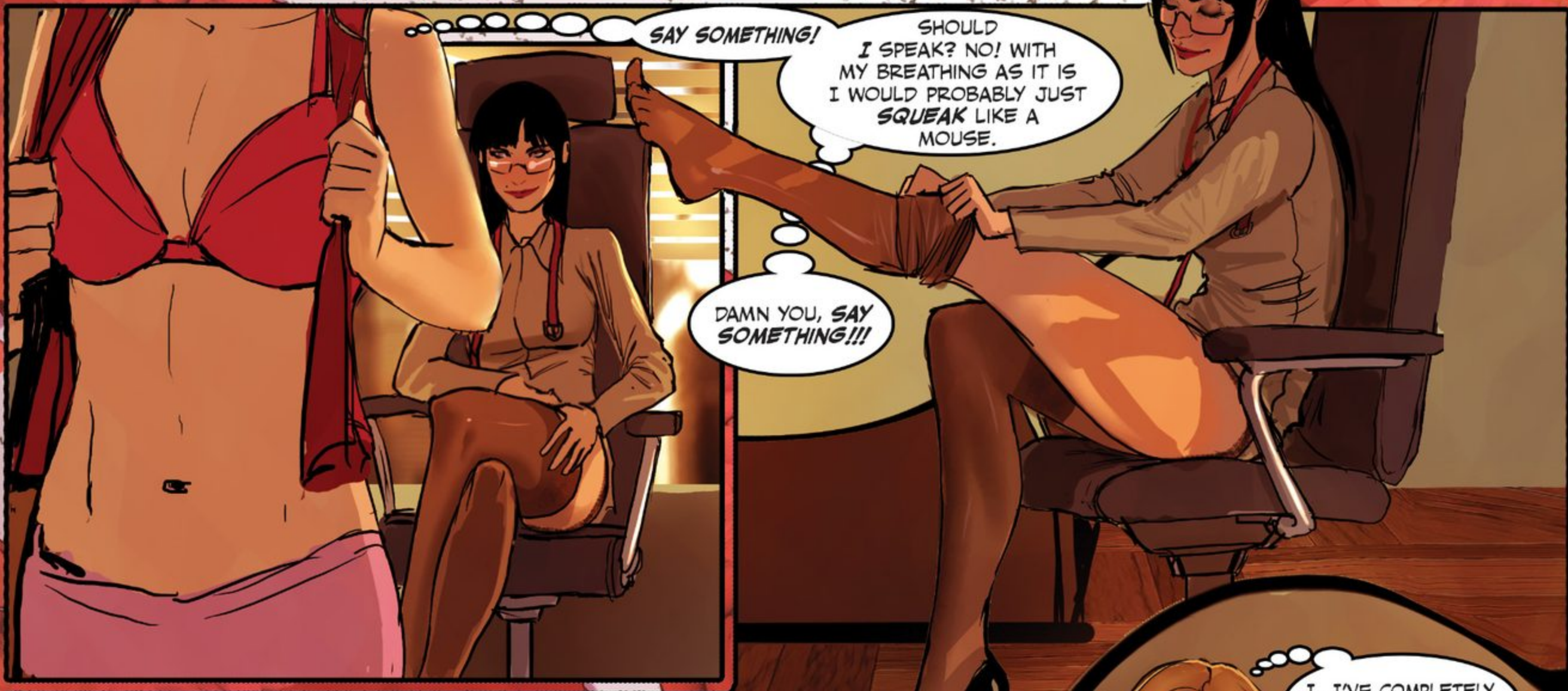
SO, WHY CAN  
I ACTUALLY HEAR MY  
OWN HEART BEATING  
WILD IN MY EARS?



I...I WANTED IN  
ON THIS GAME. I WANTED IT BADLY!  
SO WHY DO I FEEL SO...

**CORNERED!** THAT'S IT!  
I FEEL CORNERED!

CRAP...I REALLY  
AM A MOUSE!



SAY SOMETHING!

SHOULD  
I SPEAK? NO! WITH  
MY BREATHING AS IT IS  
I WOULD PROBABLY JUST  
**SQUEAK** LIKE A  
MOUSE.

DAMN YOU, **SAY**  
**SOMETHING!!!**



I...I'VE COMPLETELY  
LOST ALL CONTROL.

WELL...I MEAN...

I...I **COULD**  
STILL LEAVE.

**GIVE UP**  
ON THIS CRAZY  
FASCINATION...





BUT, HER *SMILE*...  
SHE IS NOT PRETENDING.

SHE IS TRULY ENJOYING THIS,  
JUST LIKE *LISBETH* DID.

THEY HAVE THE *SAME* SMILE...

NO, I'M NOT LEAVING!

MY GOD, YOU REALLY  
*ARE* EXCITED,  
AREN'T YOU?



YOU SEEM TO HAVE SPILT  
SOMETHING OVER YOUR PANTIES  
COME, SLIDE OVER TO ME! LET'S  
HAVE A *CLOSER* LOOK!

AHHH...A *TOUCH*...  
GOOD! THIS I *KNOW*!

THIS I CAN *FOCUS* ON!



SOFT TOUCH...A STOCKING...  
BOTH SMOOTH AND A LITTLE ROUGH...

YES...THINGS I KNOW ABOUT...  
I CAN BREATHE...I CAN DEAL  
WITH THIS.





SIT DOWN  
AND BOW YOUR  
HEAD.

GOOD! THIS  
I CAN DO! NO  
PROBLEM.

KINKY OR  
NOT, IT IS ALL  
ABOUT SEX  
IN THE END.

THAT  
I'M GOOD  
WITH.



NOW, MY  
LITTLE PLAYTHING,  
SINCE WE AREN'T IN MY  
HOME, I AM A LITTLE  
SHORT ON MY TOYS...  
HOWEVER...



SOME IMAGINATION  
AND SOME GOOD OL'  
KNOW HOW...AND I'M  
SURE I CAN KEEP  
US WELL  
ENTERTAINED.

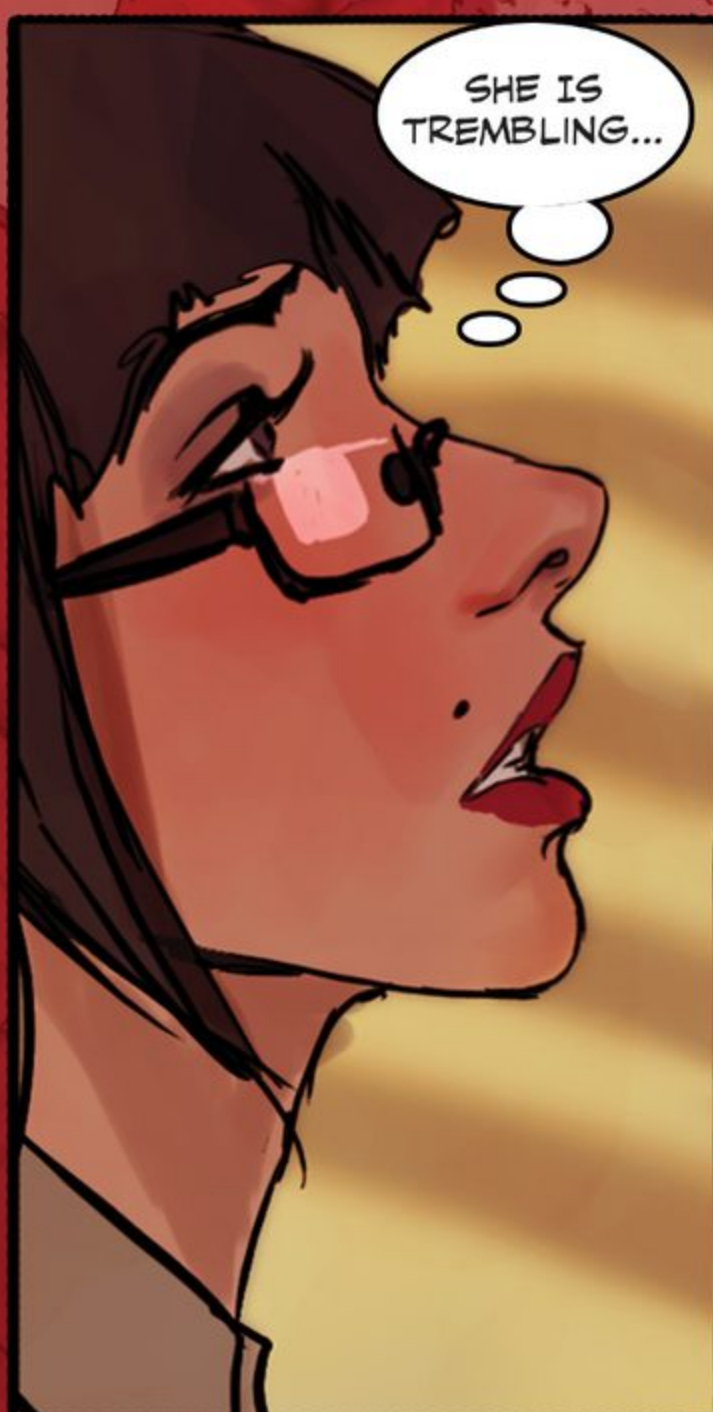


I GET IT  
NOW. I'M SCARED  
A BIT...

BUT NOT OF  
HER BODY...

I'M SCARED OF  
HER *MIND*.

OH, GOD...IF  
I LOOK AT HER, I'LL...  
I'LL FALL APART...



SHE IS  
TREMBLING...



ANNE...I WANT YOU  
TO LOOK AT ME, AND I WANT  
YOU TO LISTEN WELL. WOULD  
I BE *CORRECT* IN ASSUMING  
THAT THIS IS YOUR  
FIRST TIME?

I...HAD...  
UM...SEX...

THAT'S NOT WHAT I  
MEAN. I'M ASKING  
ABOUT BONDAGE.

OH...THAT.  
WELL, YEAH, BUT I DID  
RESEARCH IT.

I SEE...  
*ONLINE*, I  
PRESUME?

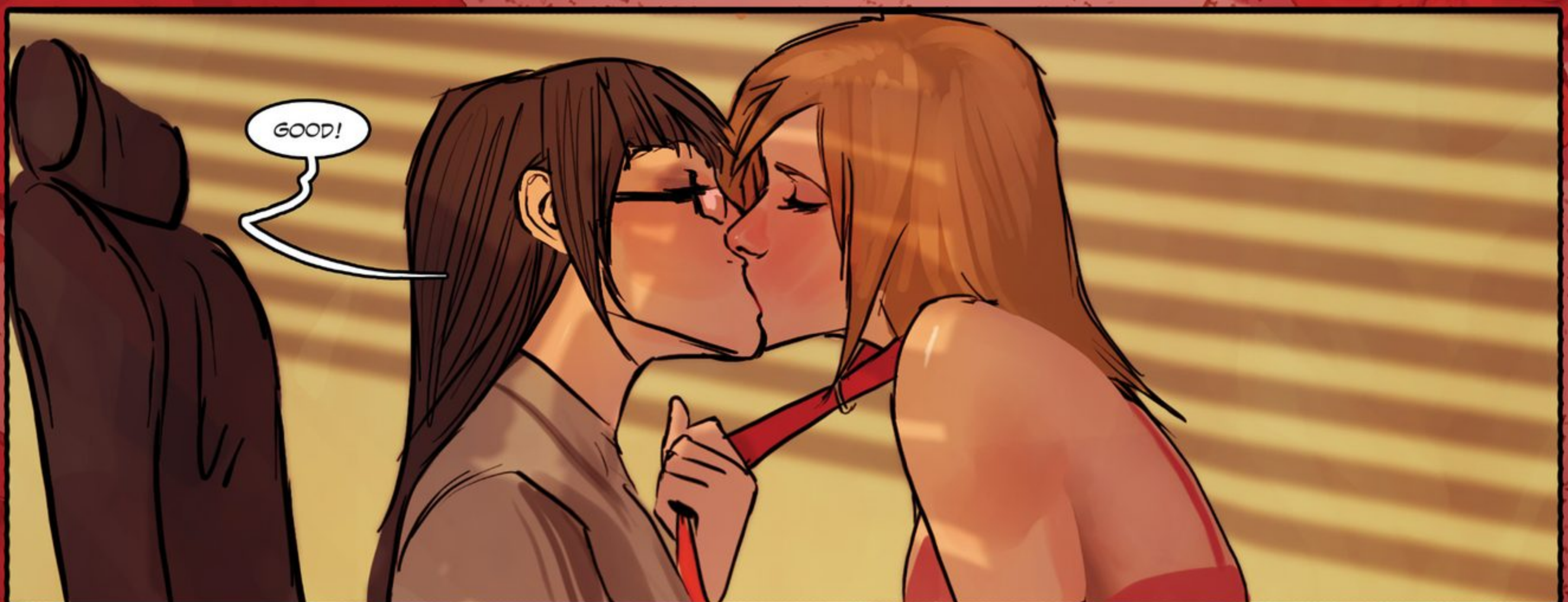
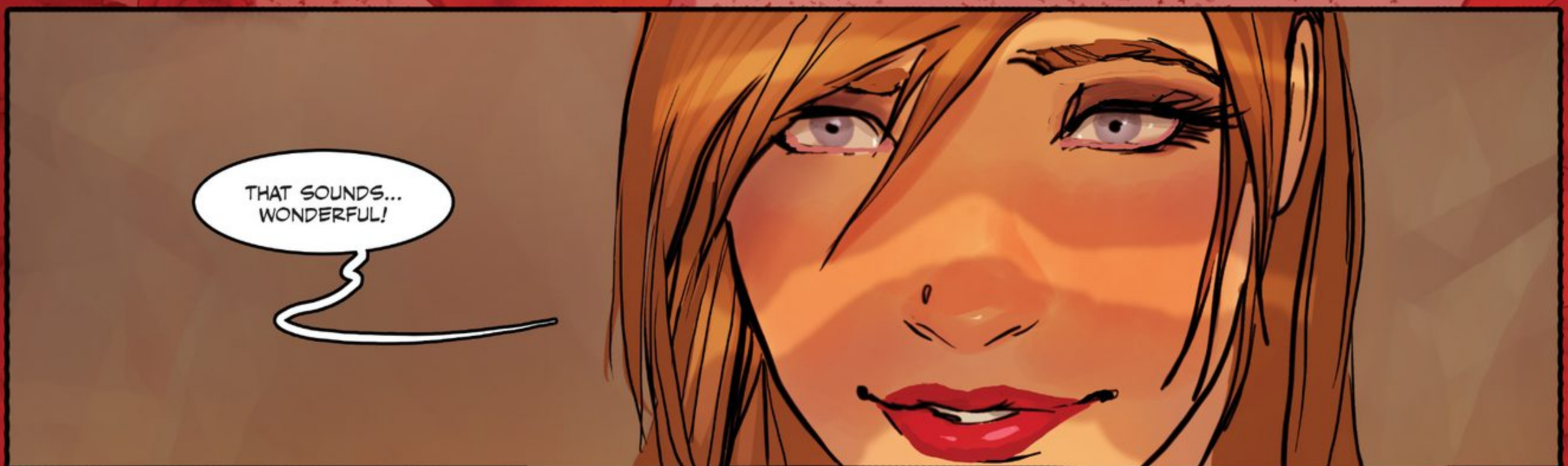
YEAH...

I...I LIKED  
THIS STUFF...  
AND YET...

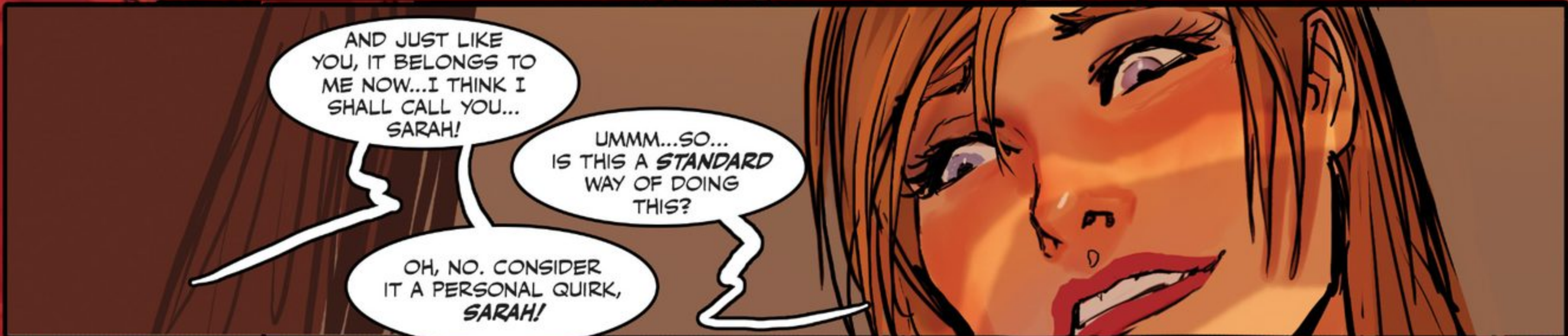
IT *SCARES*  
YOU?

...





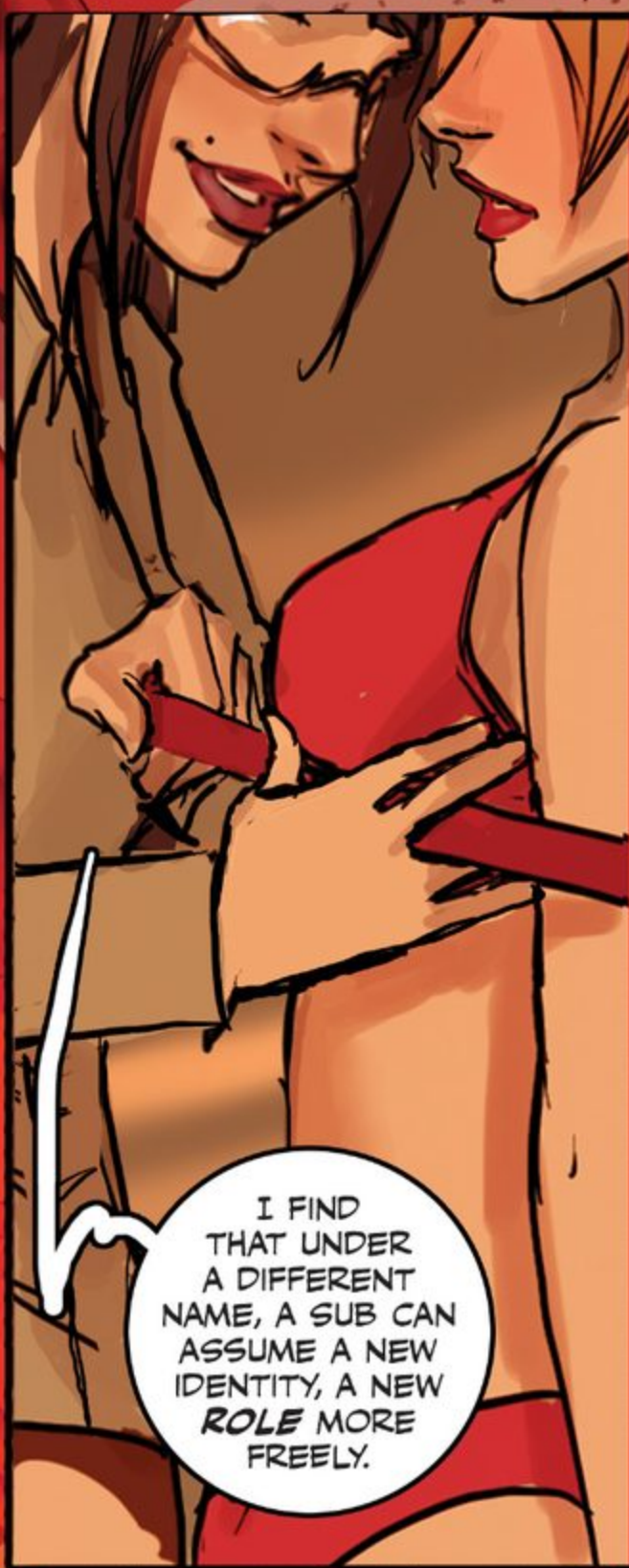




AND JUST LIKE YOU, IT BELONGS TO ME NOW...I THINK I SHALL CALL YOU... SARAH!

UMMM...SO... IS THIS A *STANDARD* WAY OF DOING THIS?

OH, NO. CONSIDER IT A PERSONAL QUIRK, *SARAH!*



I FIND THAT UNDER A DIFFERENT NAME, A SUB CAN ASSUME A NEW IDENTITY, A NEW *ROLE* MORE FREELY.



*FREELY?* THAT'S KINDA IRONIC.



OH YES! THERE *IS* AN IRONY TO BONDAGE THAT OFTEN REMAINS UNEXPLORED. IN A WAY, YOU ARE NEVER MORE FREE THAN WHEN YOU ARE BOUND...

WE ARE TAUGHT TO *HIDE* OUR DESIRES, PLEASURE IS *FROWNED* UPON. ANYTHING DEVIATING FROM THE NORM IS BRANDED AND JUDGED...

...SO WE LIVE OUR LIVES SUPPRESSING OUR DEEPEST DESIRES AND... *ADJUSTING*.

BUT WHAT IF YOU COULD *TRUST* SOMEONE TO RESTRAIN YOU. TO TAKE AWAY YOUR ABILITY TO ADJUST?

TO MAKE YOU *HELPLESS*, AND MAKE YOU FACE YOUR DESIRES GUILT-FREE.

HOW COULD IT BE YOUR FAULT? YOU ARE BOUND! THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO, IS THERE?

HEH! IT DOES MAKE... A WEIRD KIND OF SENSE.



RIGHT!?! SO YOU CAN ONLY RELAX. GIVE IN TO YOUR LUST!

UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING...

MMNNNN...

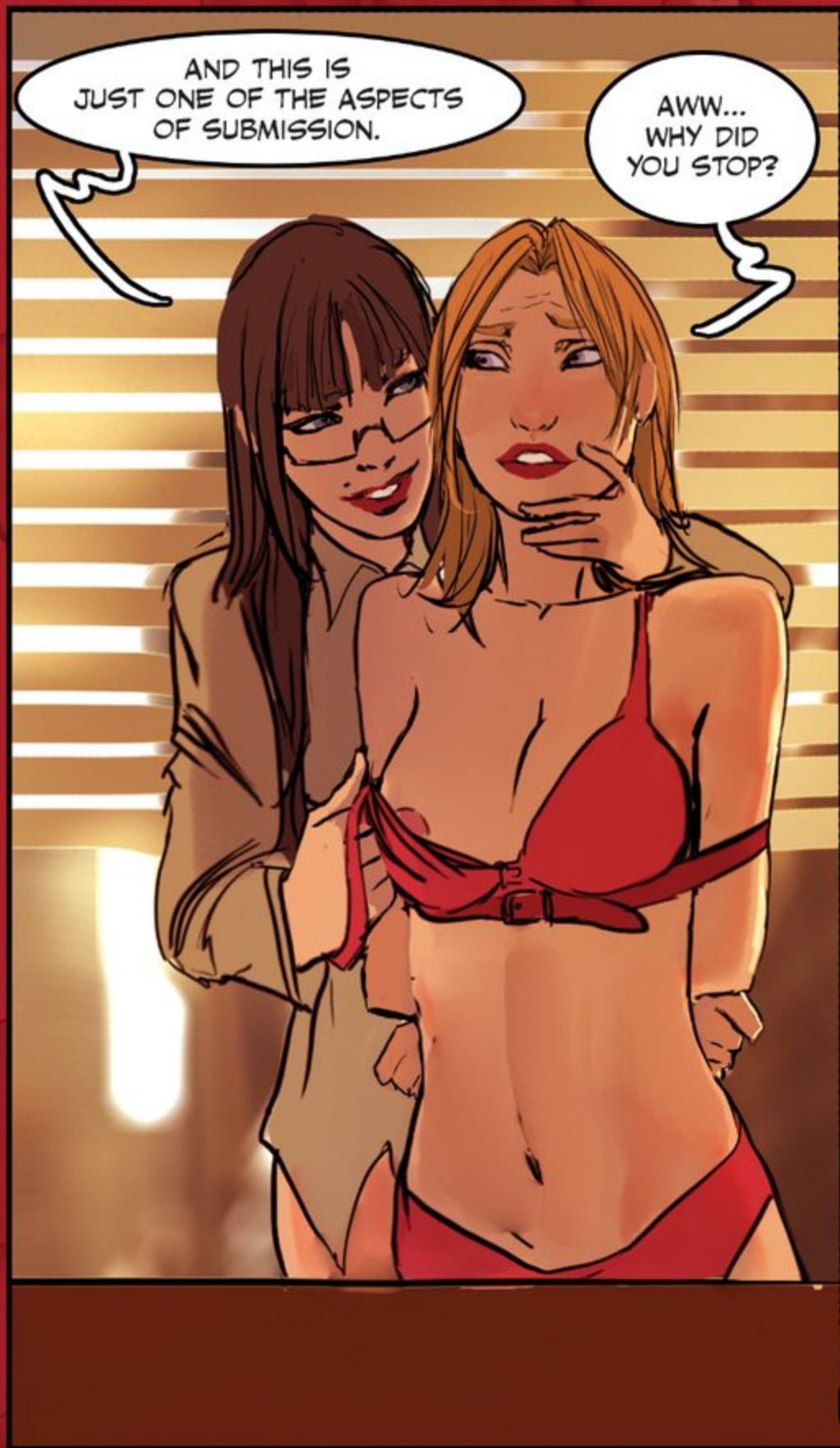


BUT *ENJOY!*



OWWWWHHH...





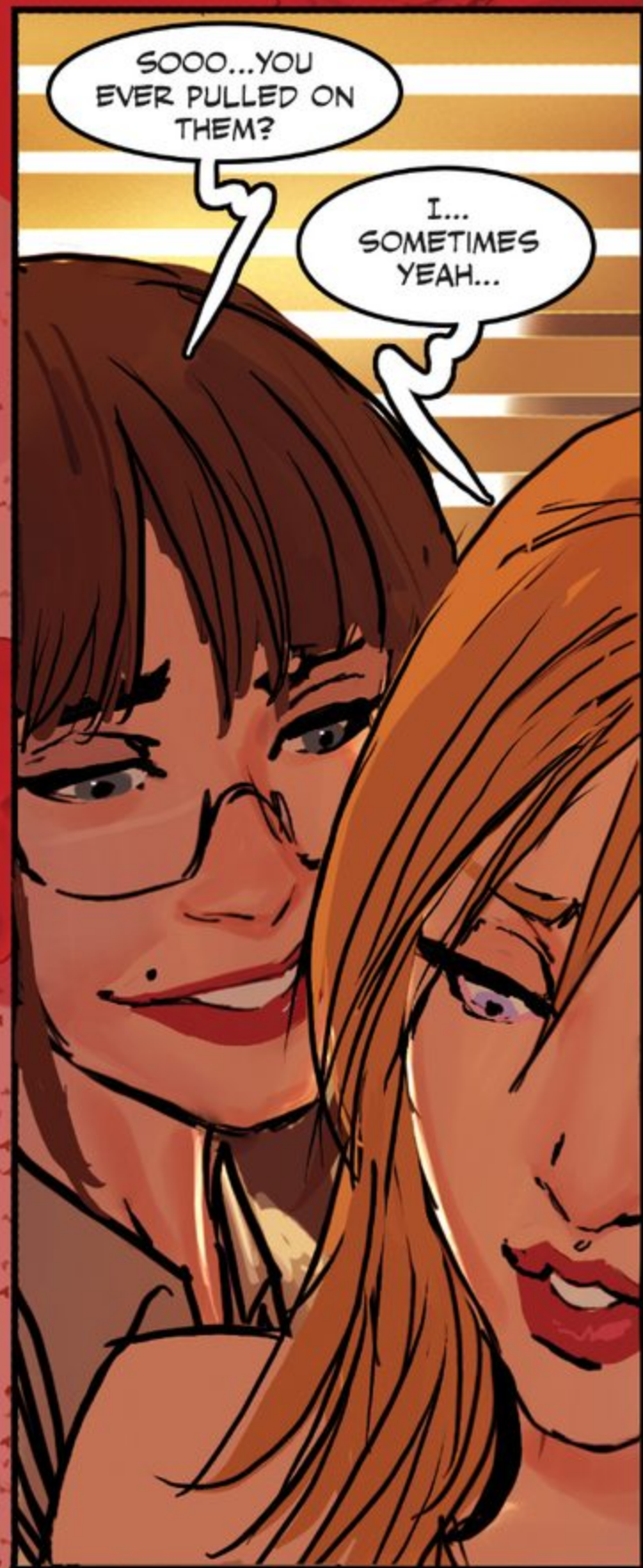
AND THIS IS JUST ONE OF THE ASPECTS OF SUBMISSION.

AWW... WHY DID YOU STOP?



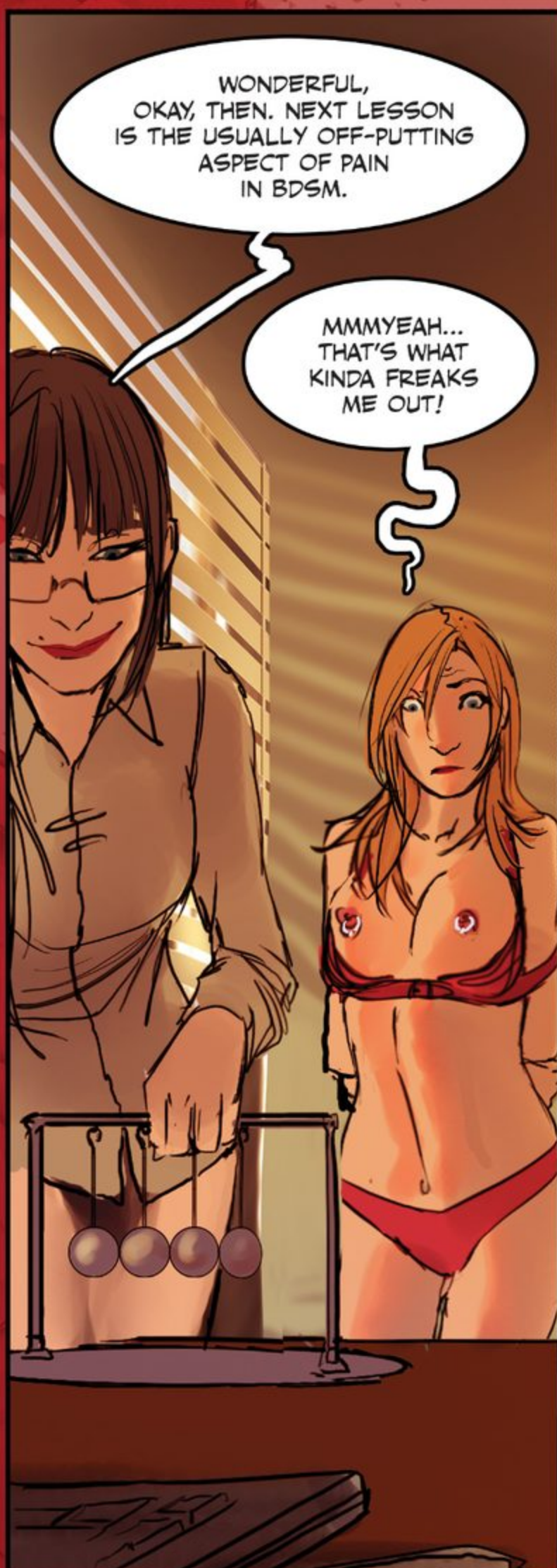
PATIENCE! IT'S A -- OOHMYGOD!!! YOU HAVE YOUR NIPPLES PIERCED!

UM...YEAH.



SOOOO...YOU EVER PULLED ON THEM?

I... SOMETIMES YEAH...



WONDERFUL, OKAY, THEN. NEXT LESSON IS THE USUALLY OFF-PUTTING ASPECT OF PAIN IN BDSM.

MMMYEAH... THAT'S WHAT KINDA FREAKS ME OUT!



NOW, NOW... SOME *SPICE* CAN MAKE A GOOD THING BETTER!



PAIN IS A METHOD OF CONTROL A DOM CAN USE. IT'S RARELY EXTREME, AND JUST LIKE BONDAGE, IT'S PURPOSE IS TO PERSUADE YOU TO EXPAND YOUR BOUNDARIES.

I, PERSONALLY, LIKE USING IT AS A TOOL IN A GAME OF FAKE CHOICES.

FAKE CHOICES?



YUP! FOR EXAMPLE, I COULD TELL YOU TO LAY DOWN ON THE FLOOR.

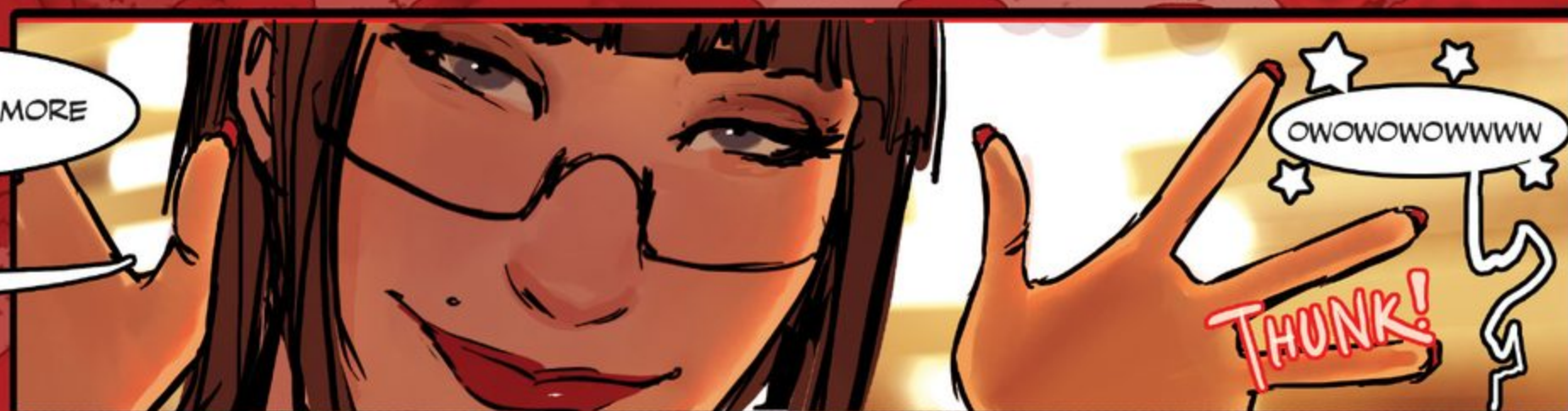
AND IF I REFUSE?

HEY, I'M ALL ABOUT THE FREEDOM OF CHOICES. THING IS, GRAVITY IS A BIT TOUGHER TO PERSUADE THAN I AM.





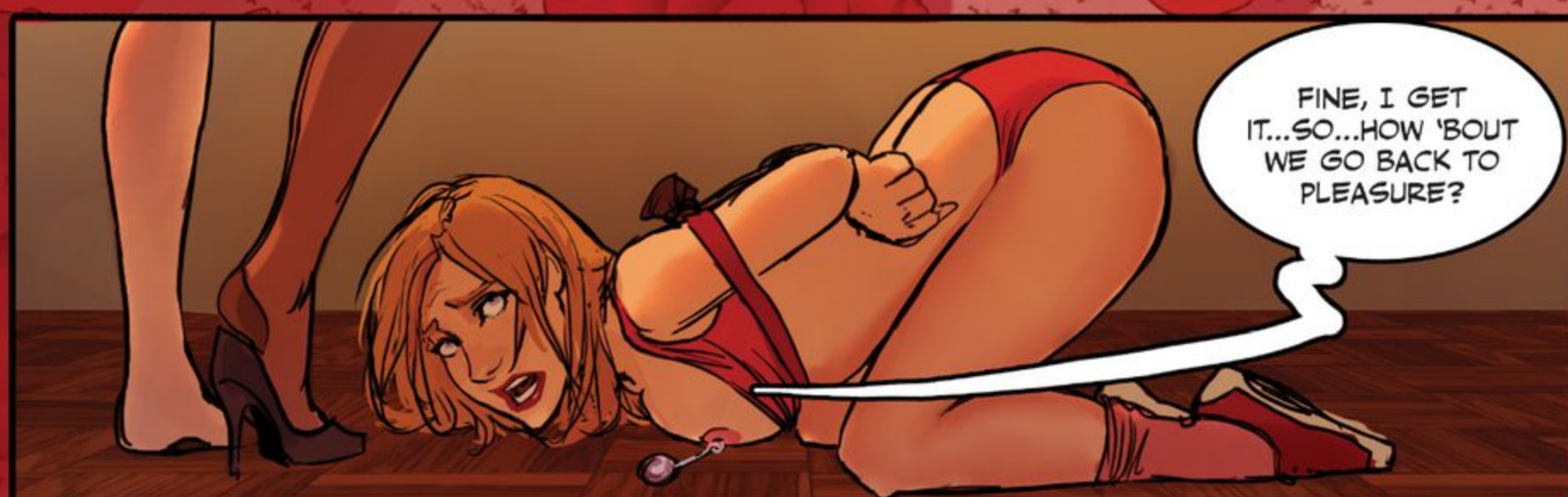
OKAYOKAYOKAY,  
I GET YOUR POINT, SO  
LET'S SKIP THE LAYING ON  
THE FLOOR BIT!



GLADLY...BUT  
*GRAVITY* WILL REQUIRE MORE  
PERSUADING!

OWOWOWOWWWW

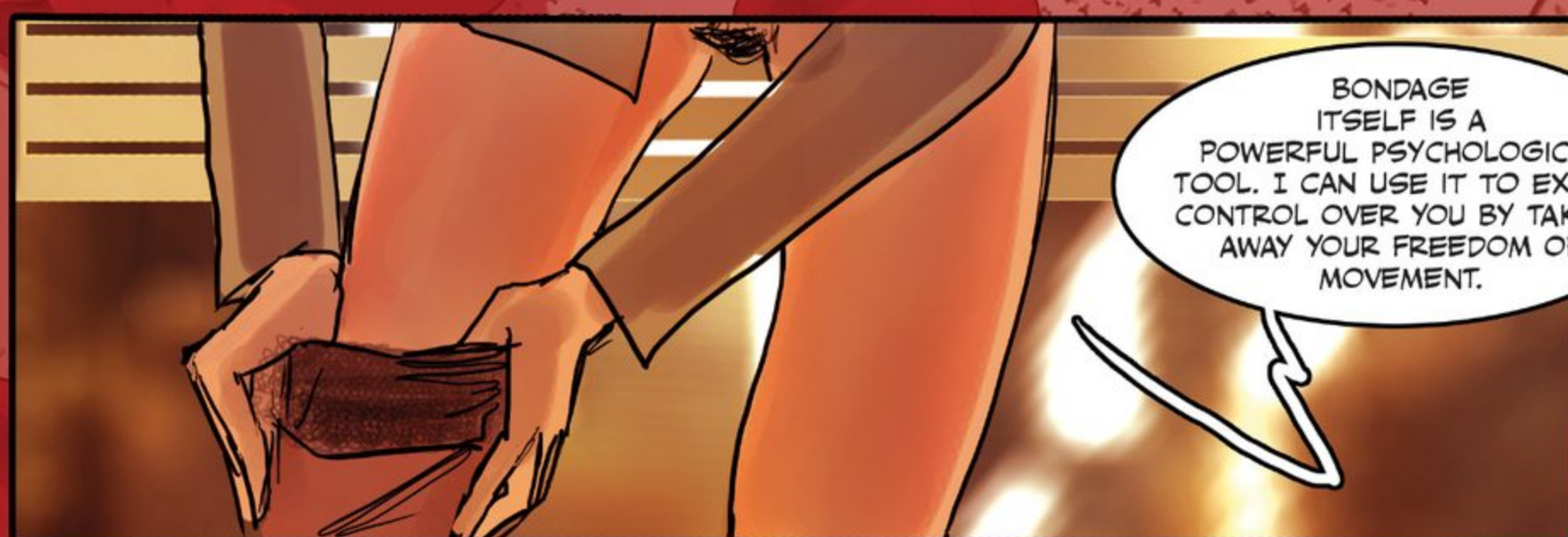
THUNK!



FINE, I GET  
IT...SO...HOW 'BOUT  
WE GO BACK TO  
PLEASURE?



OH, I'M  
*PLANNING* TO,  
SARAH, BUT FIRST, I  
THINK I CAN TEACH YOU  
A FEW MORE  
TRICKS...



BONDAGE  
ITSELF IS A  
POWERFUL PSYCHOLOGICAL  
TOOL. I CAN USE IT TO EXERT  
CONTROL OVER YOU BY TAKING  
AWAY YOUR FREEDOM OF  
MOVEMENT.



THIS IS THE  
FIRST STEP.

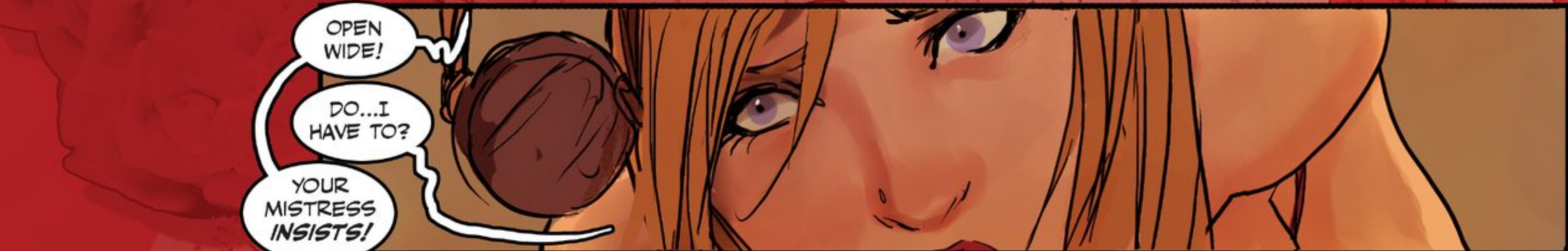


BUT THERE IS SO  
MUCH MORE...

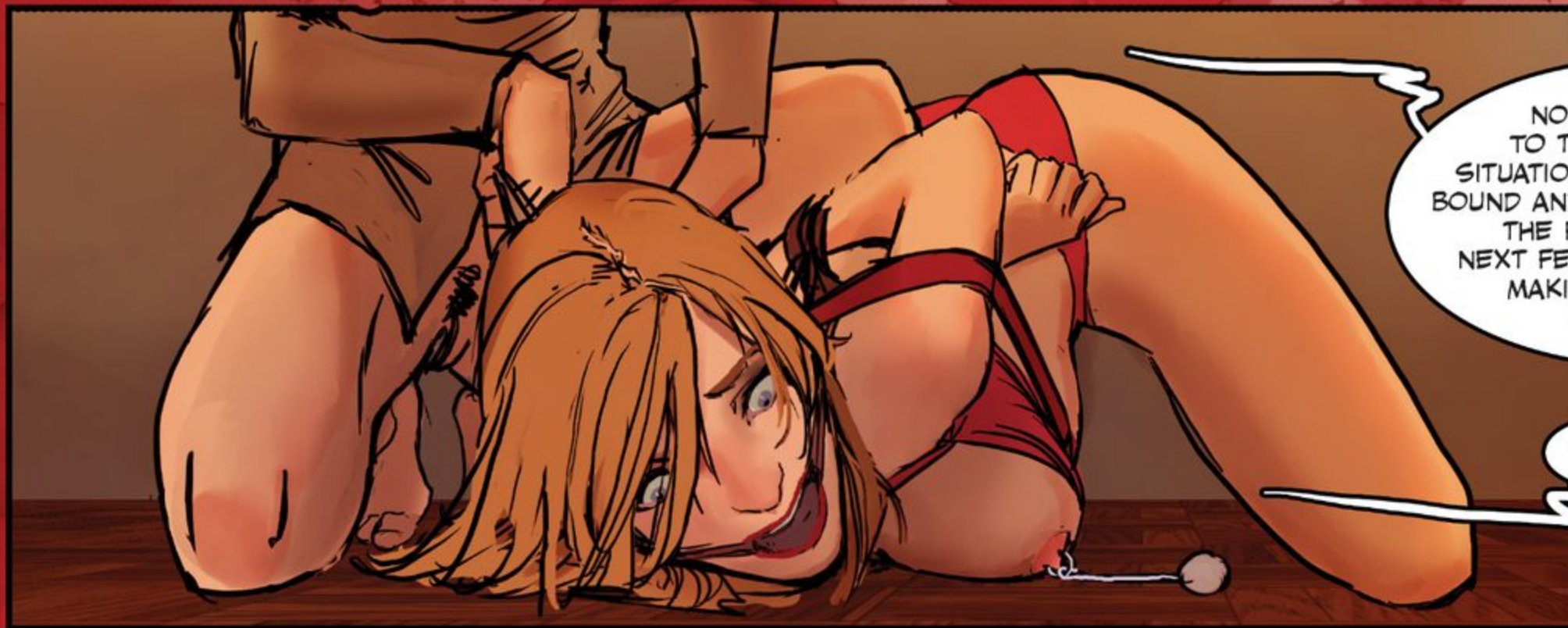




YOUR MISTRESS CAN CLAIM YOUR SENSES: TAKE AWAY YOUR SPEECH YOUR SIGHT, YOUR HEARING, LEAVING YOU FOCUSED ONLY ON TOUCH. MAKING YOU TRULY EXPERIENCE EVERY SECOND OF PLEASURE!



OPEN WIDE!  
DO...I HAVE TO?  
YOUR MISTRESS INSISTS!



NOW, I WANT YOU TO TRULY FEEL YOUR SITUATION. YOU ARE LOCKED, BOUND AND GAGGED. CONSIDER THE FACT THAT IN THE NEXT FEW HOURS, I WILL BE MAKING ALL OF YOUR DECISIONS.

MMPH!



I WILL CONTROL YOUR SENSES!

MWAH?



IN THE SIGHTLESS DARK, I WILL OPEN YOUR EYES TO NEW PLEASURES.

MMMNNN!



AND ABOVE ALL, I WILL KEEP YOU **SAFE**. WHILE YOU'RE WITH ME YOU WILL BE **SARAH**. THERE IS NO **ANNE**. ANNE IS CLEAN FROM ALL OF THIS DIRTY BUSINESS...

ONLY SARAH CAN EXPLORE THESE DARK PLEASURES.

ACCEPT THE FACT THAT YOU ARE MY TOY NOW, SARAH, AND I TAKE **GOOD** CARE OF MY TOYS.

NOW, WHAT DO YOU SAY WE HAVE SOME FUN?



THIS NEXT PART IS A RATHER *EXTENSIVE* DESCRIPTION OF THE SEXUAL INTERACTIONS BETWEEN ALLISON AND SARAH/ANNE WHICH I WILL SKIP AS IT WOULD ADD UNNECESSARY PADDING TO AN ALREADY LENGTHY BIT OF WRITING...

BUT, YOU GET THE POINT. ALLISON IN MY STORIES WAS A SUPER DOMME! ALWAYS READY FOR SEX, ETERNALLY WILD...SHE WAS A FUN FANTASY...

A FANTASY, BOTH *REAL* ALLY AND I ENJOYED QUITE A BIT.

FOR A *WHILE*, AT LEAST.

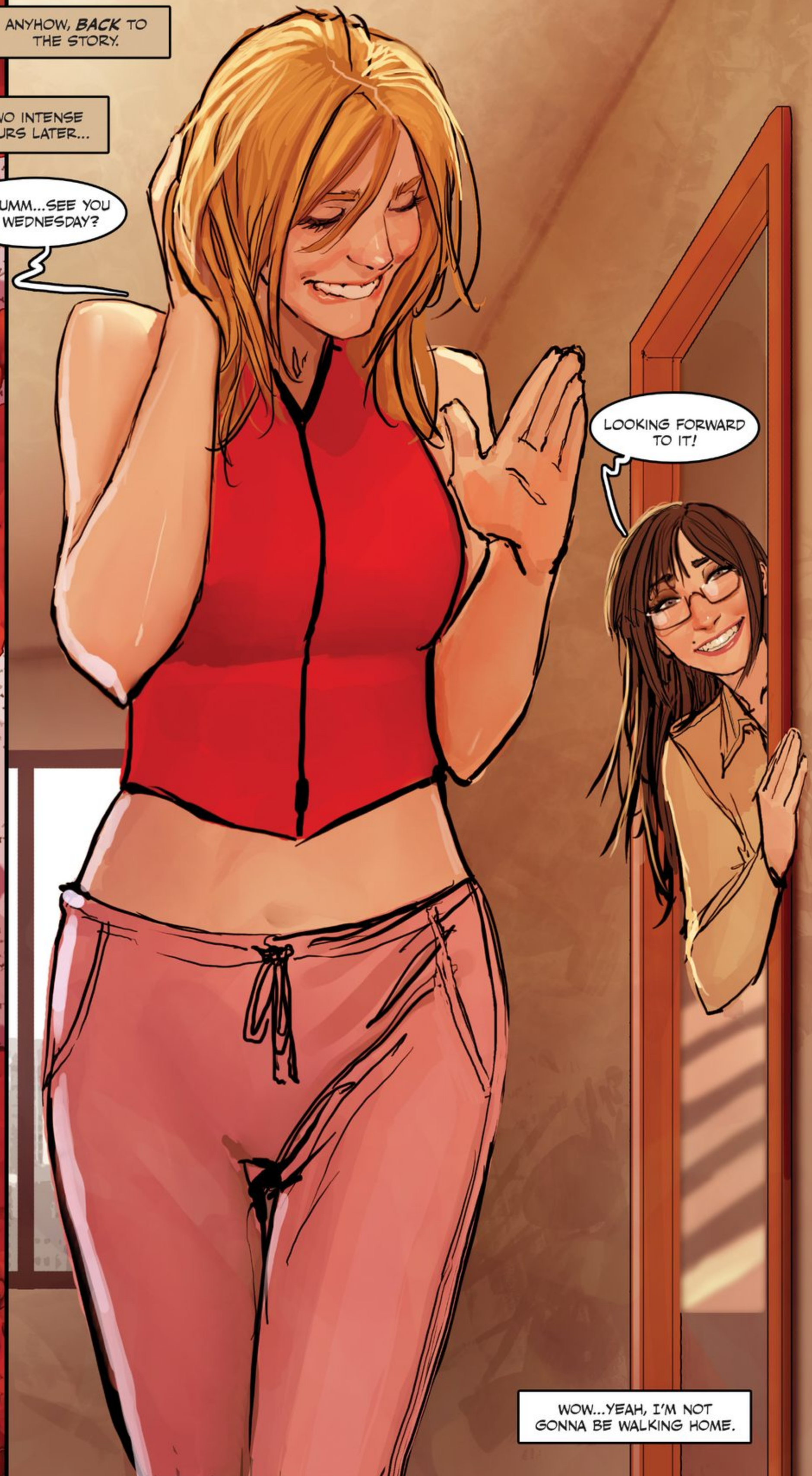
ANYHOW, *BACK* TO THE STORY.

TWO INTENSE HOURS LATER...

SO...UMM...SEE YOU ON WEDNESDAY?

LOOKING FORWARD TO IT!

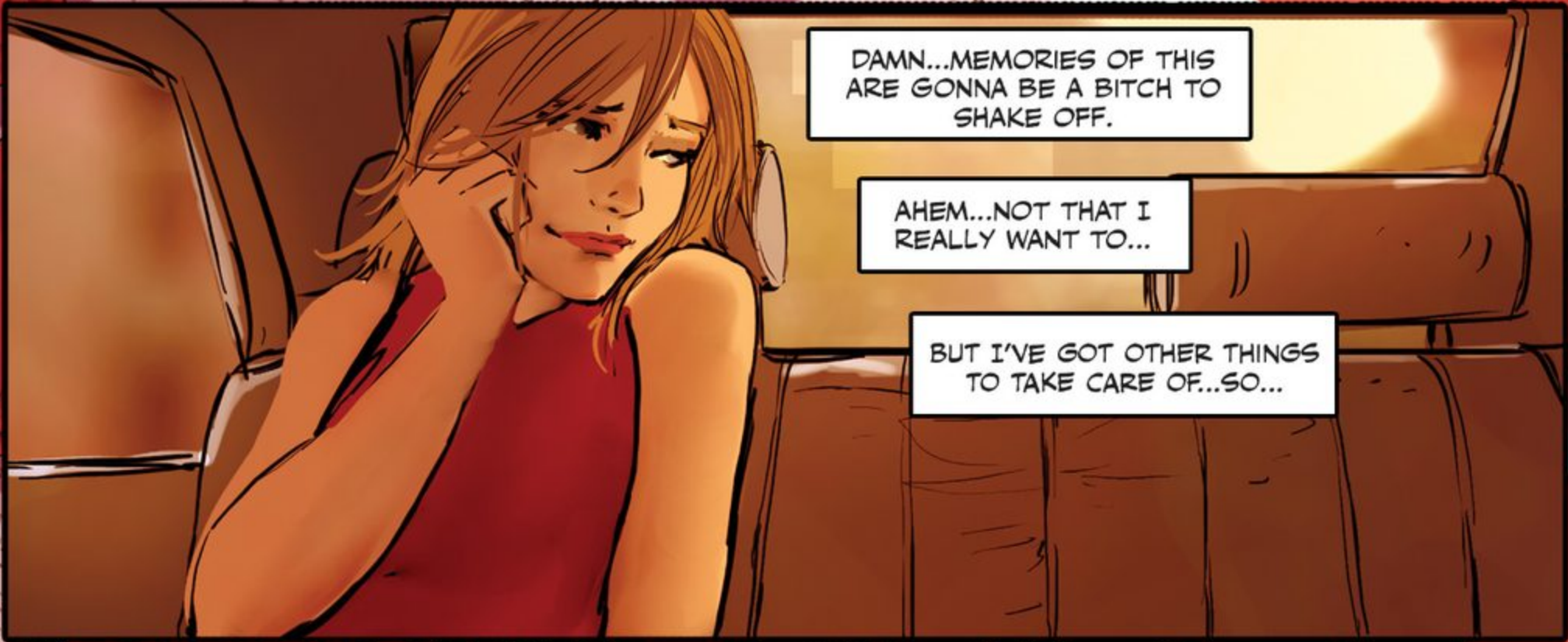
WOW...YEAH, I'M NOT GONNA BE WALKING HOME.







NOW...  
THE MOST **IMPORTANT**  
LESSON FOR TODAY. YOU NOW  
FEEL THE CONTROL TAKEN FROM YOU  
BY SILENCING YOUR SPEECH. BUT  
THERE IS ANOTHER WAY TO RELEASE  
YOUR INHIBITIONS, AND AT  
THE SAME TIME MAKE  
THE GAME SAFER.



DAMN...MEMORIES OF THIS  
ARE GONNA BE A BITCH TO  
SHAKE OFF.

AHEM...NOT THAT I  
REALLY WANT TO...

BUT I'VE GOT OTHER THINGS  
TO TAKE CARE OF...SO...



"**NO**" IS AN ABSOLUTE!  
NO MEANS NO! THIS IS TRUE IN  
ALL ASPECTS OF YOUR LIFE. ALL, THAT IS,  
EXCEPT FOR BDSM. IN THE GAME OF PRETENSE,  
AND SURRENDER THAT WE PLAY, "NO" IS A  
CATHARTIC CELEBRATION OF PLEASURE!  
"PLEASE," "STOP," "LET ME GO" -- THEY ARE  
NOTHING BUT FUEL FOR THE  
GAME'S FIRE.



A DOMME WILL  
RELISH YOUR OBJECTING! "**NO**"  
ONLY DRIVES THE GAME FORWARD.  
THIS IS WHY WE HAVE **SAFECODES**. IF I  
HEAR YOU SAY "**SUNSTONE**," I WILL KNOW  
YOU HAVE REACHED YOUR LIMIT. IT IS  
THE ONLY THING THAT WILL  
MAKE ME STOP.



NOW,  
WHAT IS THE  
SAFECODE?

**SUNSTONE!**

GOOD!  
SO, SHALL WE  
PROCEED?

Y...YES  
MISTRESS!



OKAY, TOMORROW, I NEED TO  
PAY THE PHONE BILL...AND  
THEN ON WEDNESDAY...

OKAY, ANNE, STOP  
THINKING ABOUT IT!



NOW, **BEG** ME TO STOP!  
RELEASE YOUR PROTESTS  
AND FEED THE FIRE!

I...OH, GOD!  
S...STOP...STOP,  
MISTRESS!  
PLEASE...STOP IT...  
LET OHHHH...LET  
M...OH...OH...

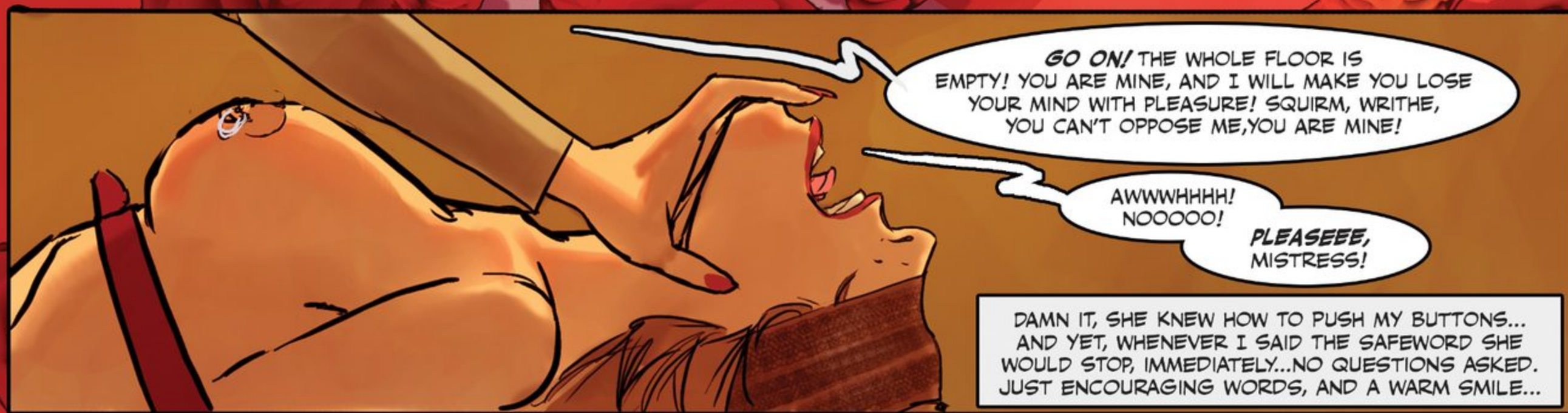
SHE WAS RIGHT...IT  
WAS A MOMENT OF  
PURE RELEASE...



WHAT THE HELL???

ARGH! I'VE HAD SEX MANY  
TIMES...SO WHY CAN'T I STOP  
THINKING ABOUT THIS TIME?





DAMN IT, SHE KNEW HOW TO PUSH MY BUTTONS... AND YET, WHENEVER I SAID THE SAFEWORD SHE WOULD STOP, IMMEDIATELY...NO QUESTIONS ASKED. JUST ENCOURAGING WORDS, AND A WARM SMILE...



AND, I...I **KNEW!**

I DIDN'T *WANT* HER TO STOP!



TRUSTING SOMEONE TO THAT EXTENT...TO LET THEM BIND YOU...TAKE YOU...

IT FELT LIKE...PUREST RELEASE.



THAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE GAME!

TO LET GO...RELAX...ACCEPT THE PLEASURE!

AND PLAY THE GAME...

A GAME OF MAKE-BELIEVE.



AND WHAT AN **AMAZING** GAME IT IS!

As her hands started mischievously moving in, Anne felt that warm sensation of sinking back into a wonderful world of secret pleasures.

At that moment, a small, still-rational part of her chuckled at the simple brilliance of Allison's idea of taking away her name. In a way, she was not the same person in these secret times of carnal release... Be it alone or with a partner, in these moments she was a wild, untamed creature of lust and desire.

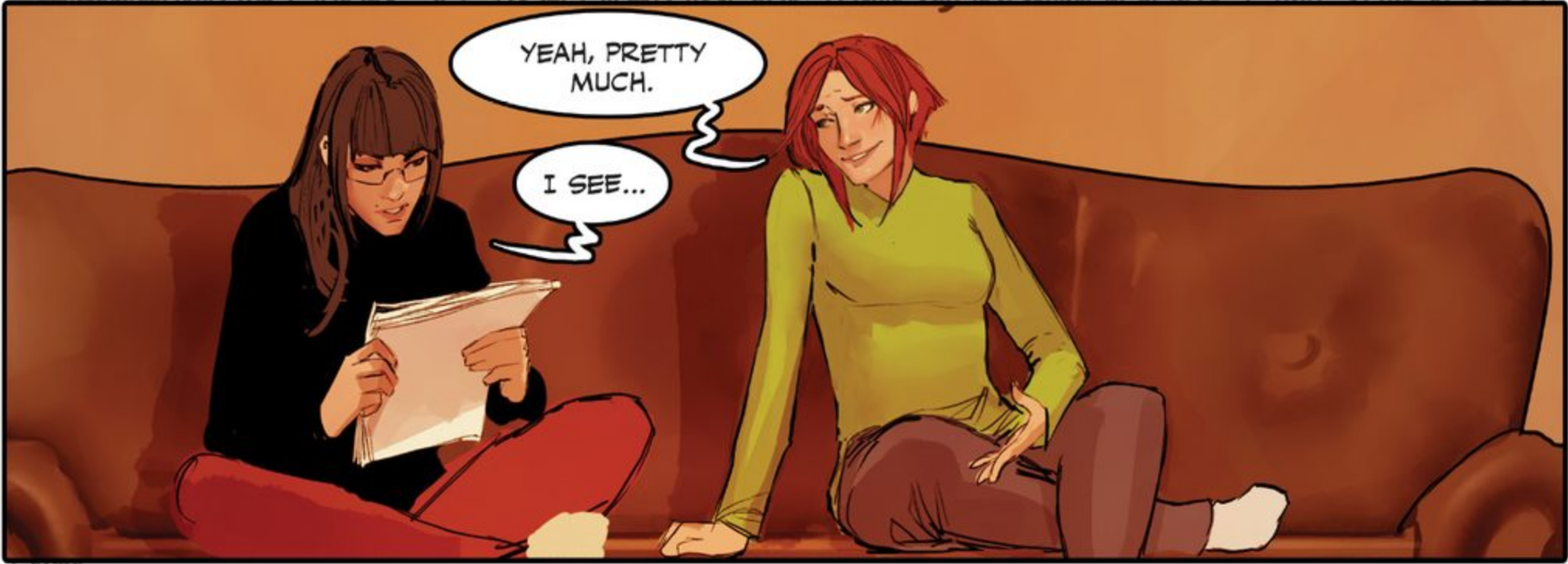
Truth was...Allison hadn't taken her name. She had in fact given a name to that secret person she would become.

She was Sarah, and she was finally free.



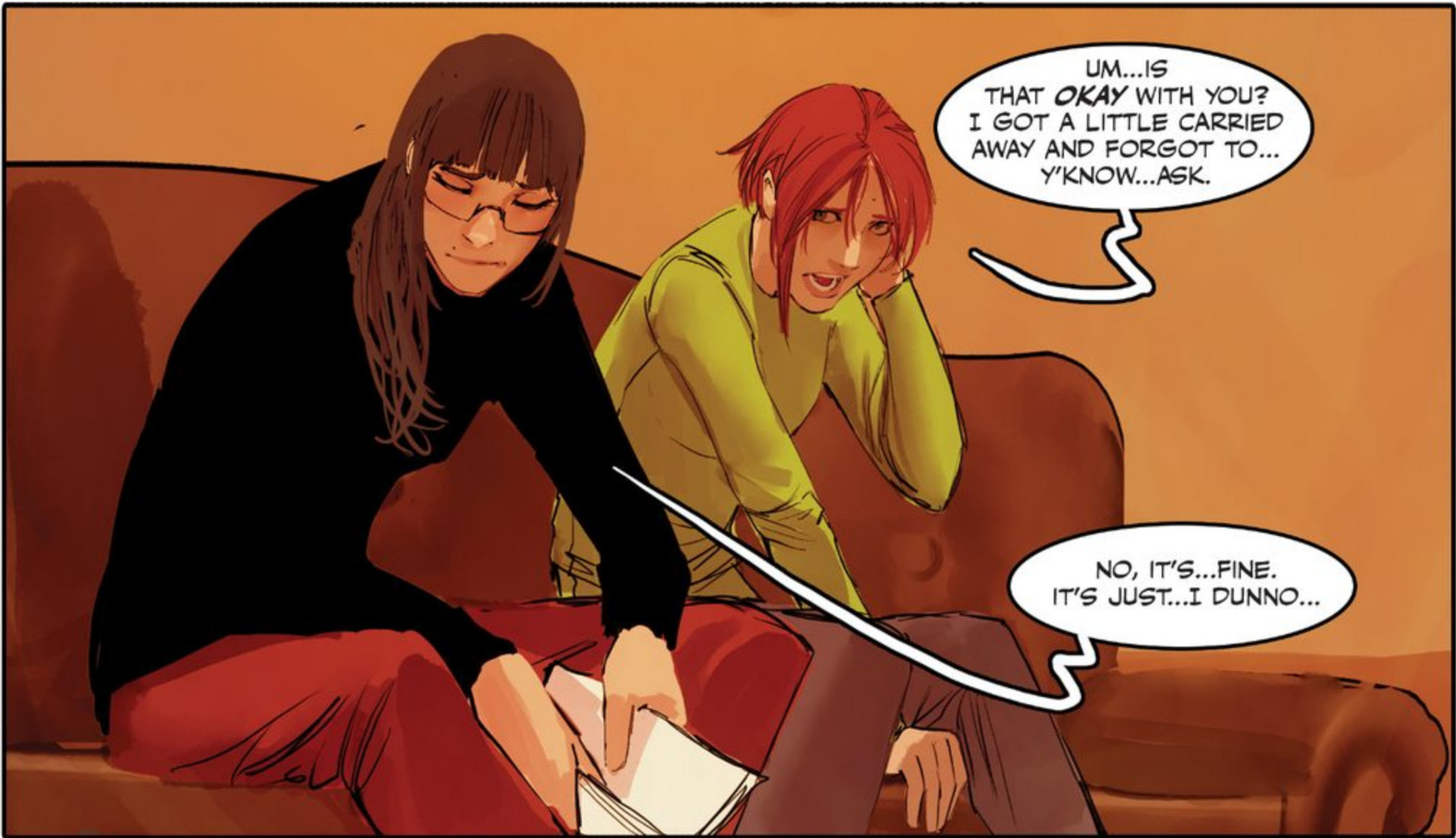


SO...BASICALLY  
YOU *RETCONNED*  
THIS ANNE GIRL TO BE  
THE *SARAH* FROM OUR  
STORY?



YEAH, PRETTY  
MUCH.

I SEE...



UM...IS  
THAT *OKAY* WITH YOU?  
I GOT A LITTLE CARRIED  
AWAY AND FORGOT TO...  
Y'KNOW...ASK.

NO, IT'S...FINE.  
IT'S JUST...I DUNNO...



FEELS A BIT ODD, YOU  
KNOW. I MEAN, IT WAS  
FUN WHEN YOU INCLUDED SARAH  
IN THE STORIES...SHE WORKED  
WELL AS A CHARACTER WHO WAS  
NEW TO THE GAME...A READER  
PROXY TO ASK THE RIGHT  
QUESTIONS, AND  
ALL THAT.

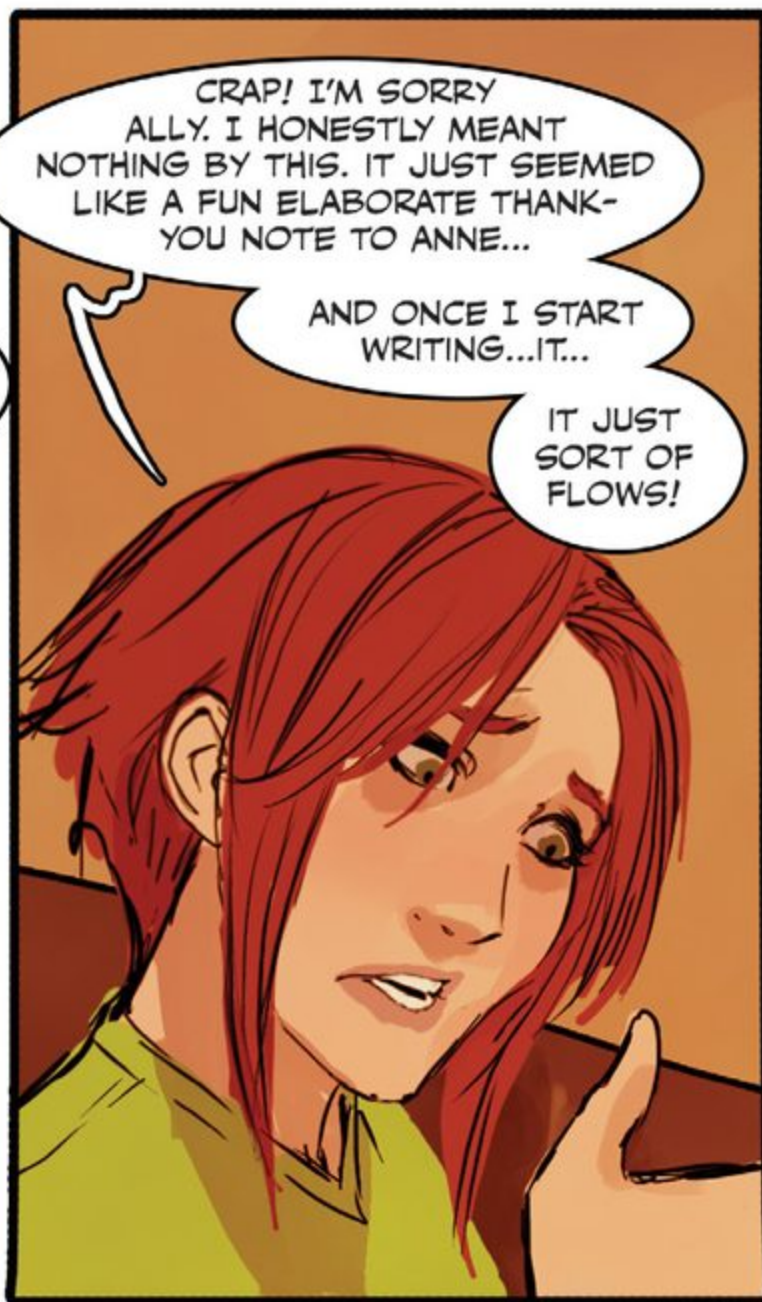
BUT NOW,  
SHE IS THIS *ANNE*  
PERSON...





I MEAN, DON'T GET ME WRONG...IT'S A VERY HOT STORY, AND THE WHOLE TAKING OF HER NAME BUSINESS WAS VERY SEXY.

IT'S JUST... IT WAS *OUR* STORY, SO I...I DON'T KNOW...



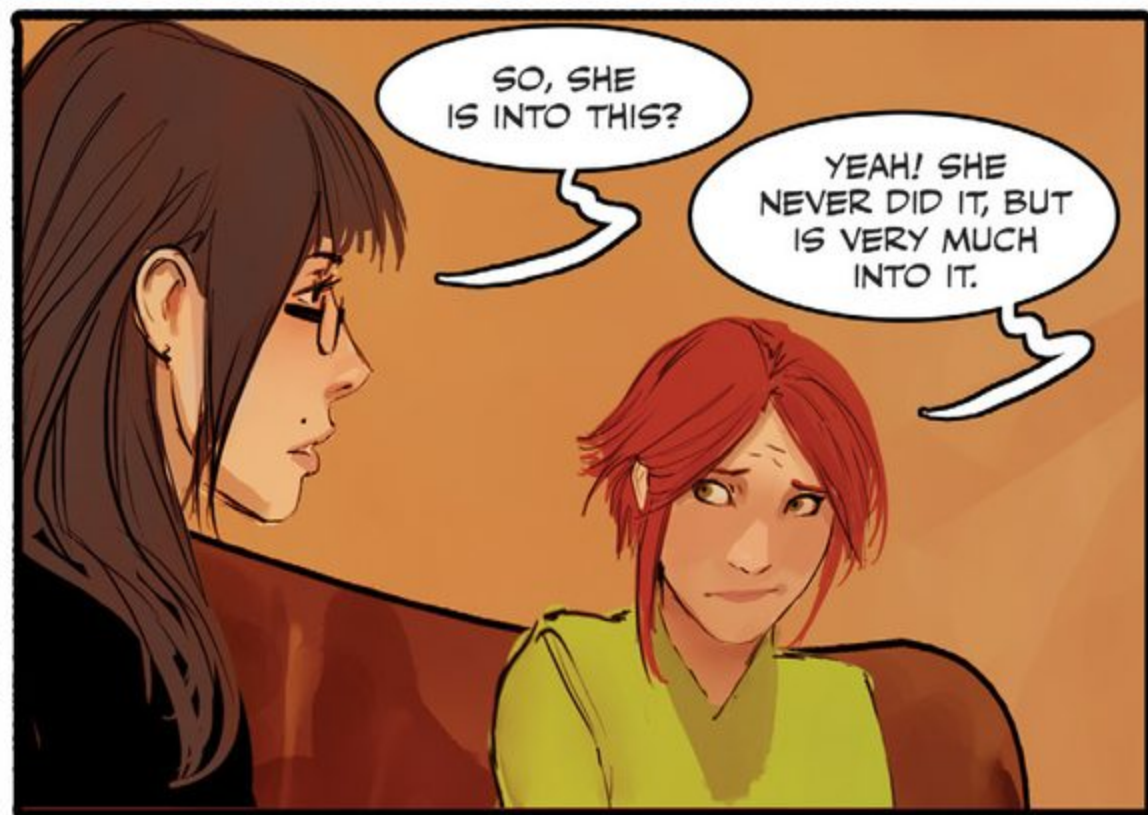
CRAP! I'M SORRY ALLY. I HONESTLY MEANT NOTHING BY THIS. IT JUST SEEMED LIKE A FUN ELABORATE THANK-YOU NOTE TO ANNE...

AND ONCE I START WRITING...IT...

IT JUST SORT OF FLOWS!

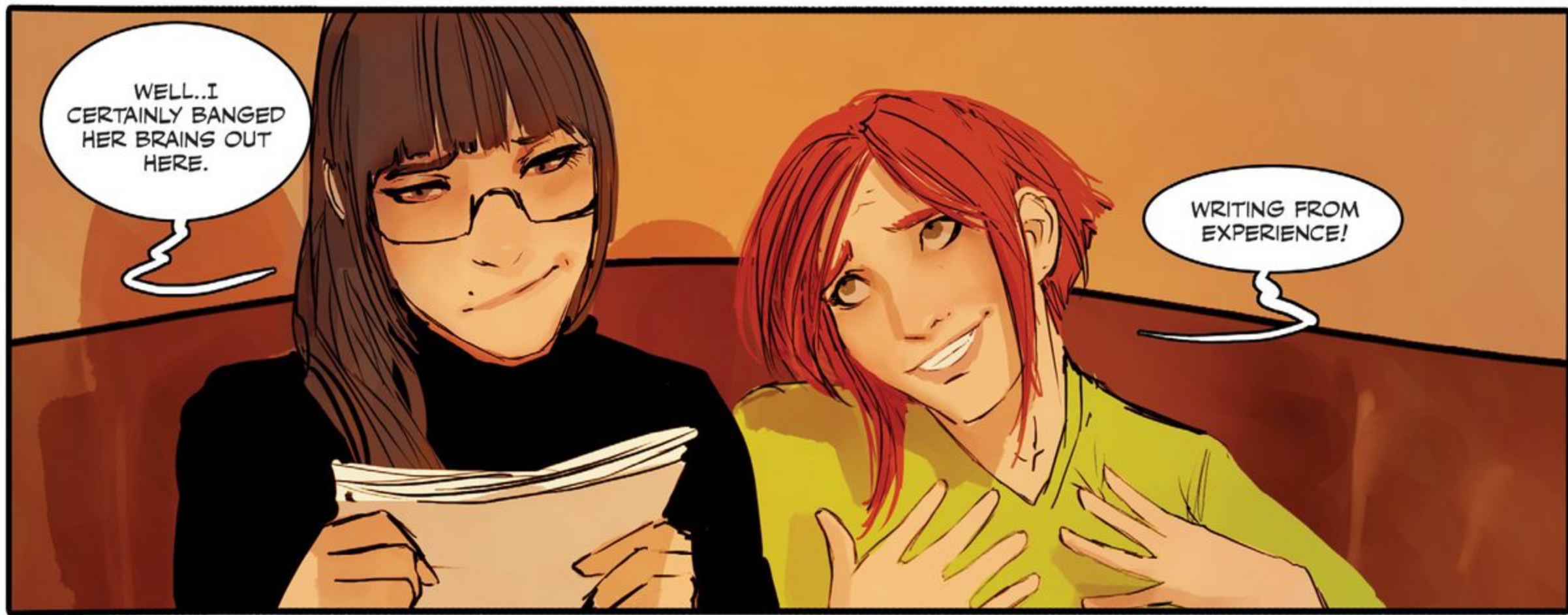


NAH. IT'S OKAY. I'M OVERREACTING.



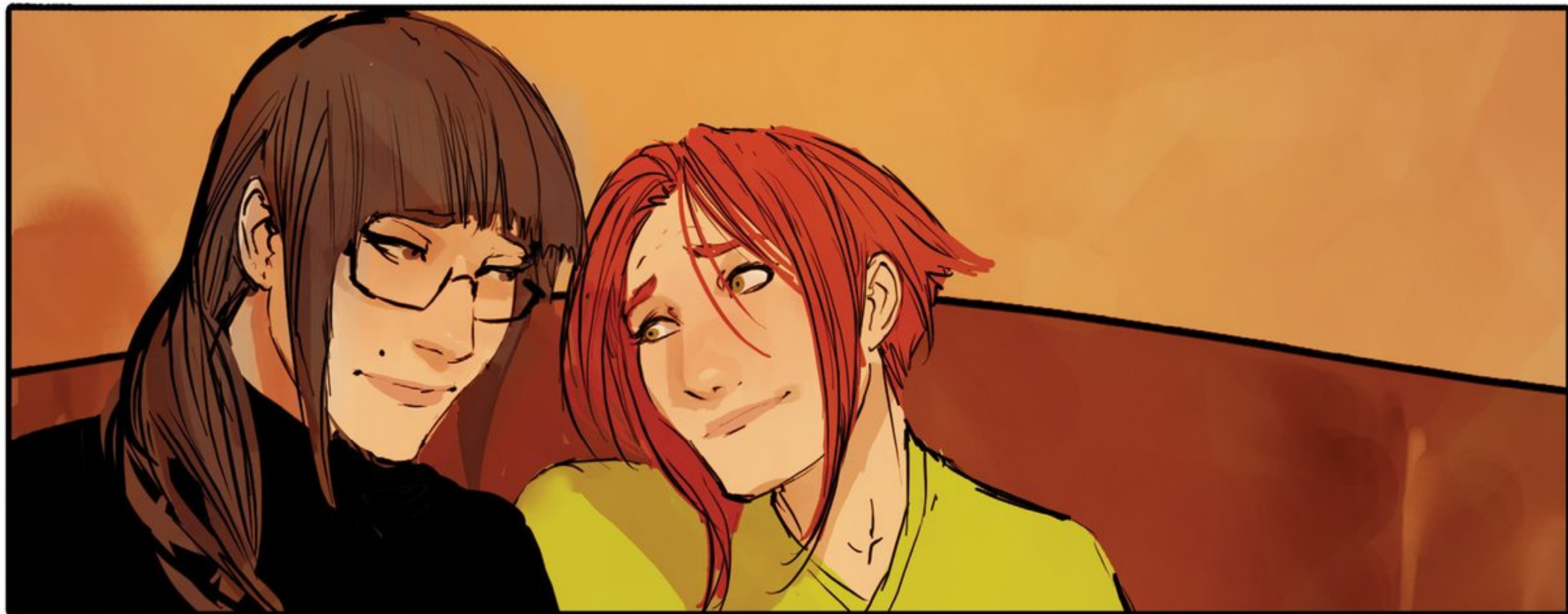
SO, SHE IS INTO THIS?

YEAH! SHE NEVER DID IT, BUT IS VERY MUCH INTO IT.

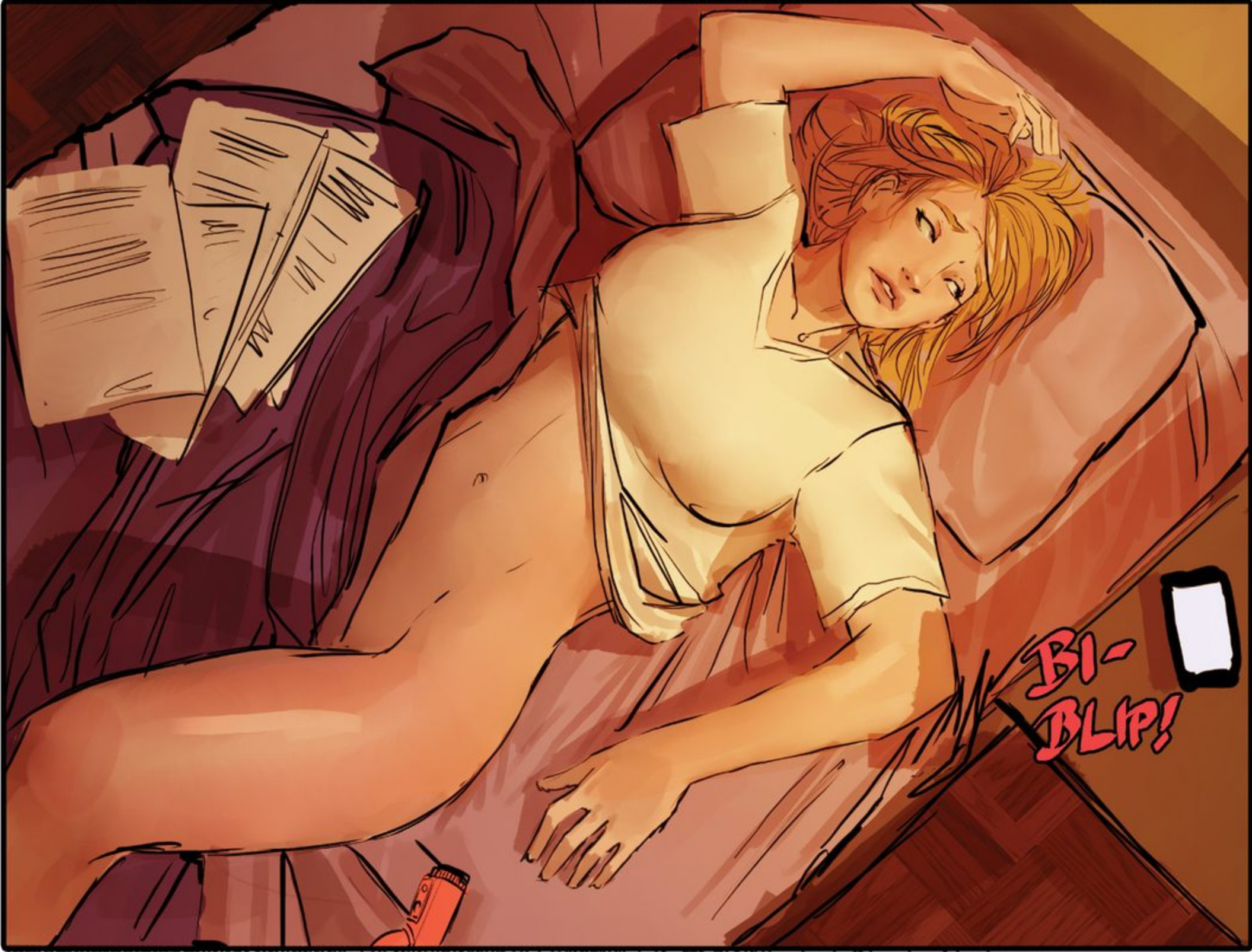
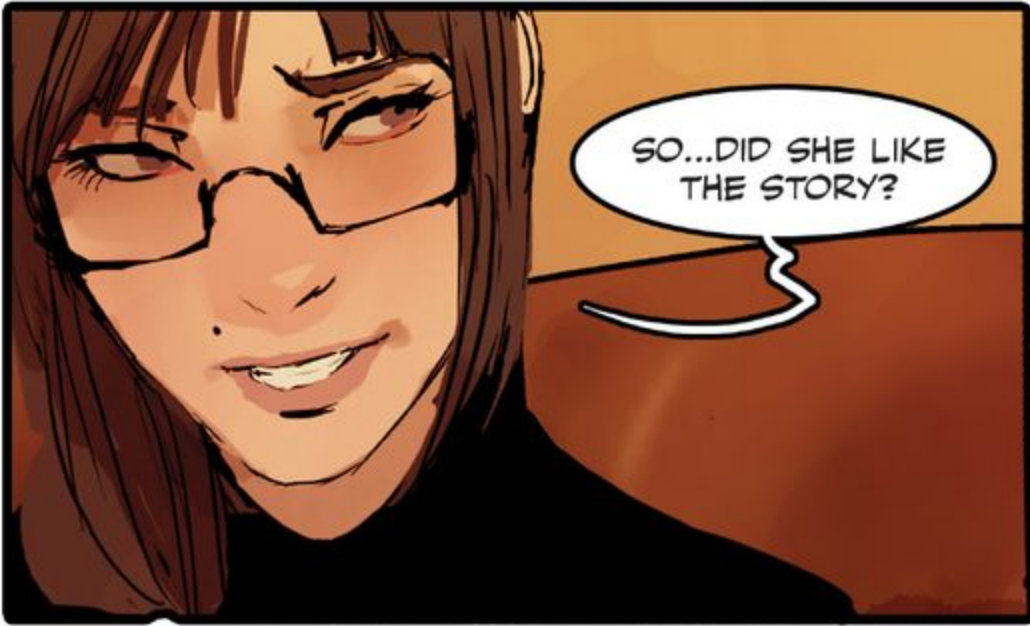


WELL...I CERTAINLY BANGED HER BRAINS OUT HERE.

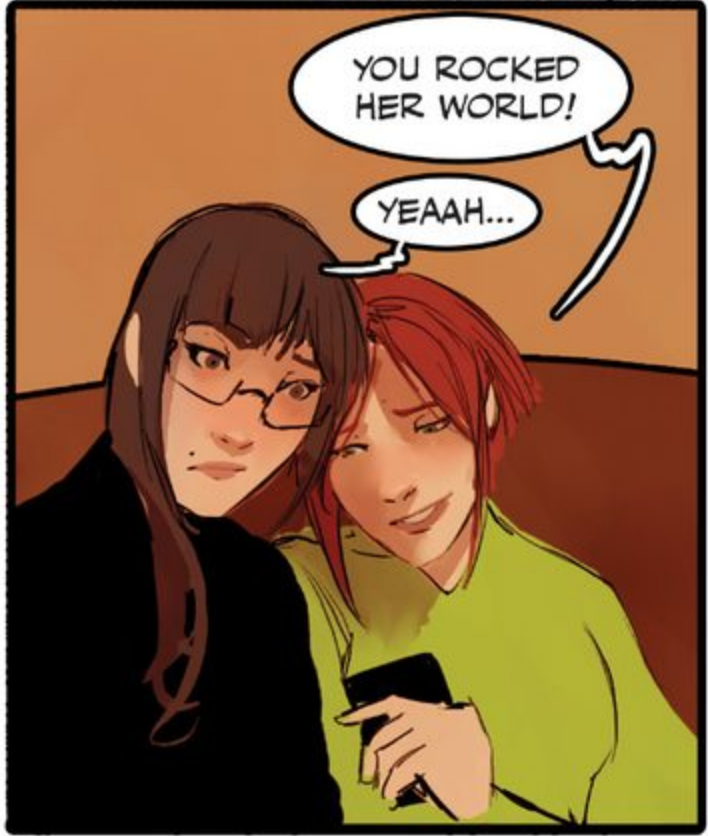
WRITING FROM EXPERIENCE!







I RATE IT FIVE OUT OF FIVE VIBRATORS...I AM SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING SWITCHING TO SOME WALL SOCKET POWERED TOYS BECAUSE OF THIS STORY...







YOU DO REALIZE THIS LITTLE STORY OF YOURS PRETTY MUCH KILLED ANY CHANCE OF A NORMAL CONVERSATION?

YEAH... I MIGHT HAVE BROUGHT AN ELEPHANT IN THAT ROOM.



TRY DINOSAUR!



ALLY?  
WHAT?



ARE YOU... ANGRY?



HUH?



I...I REALLY MEANT NOTHING BY THIS STORY.



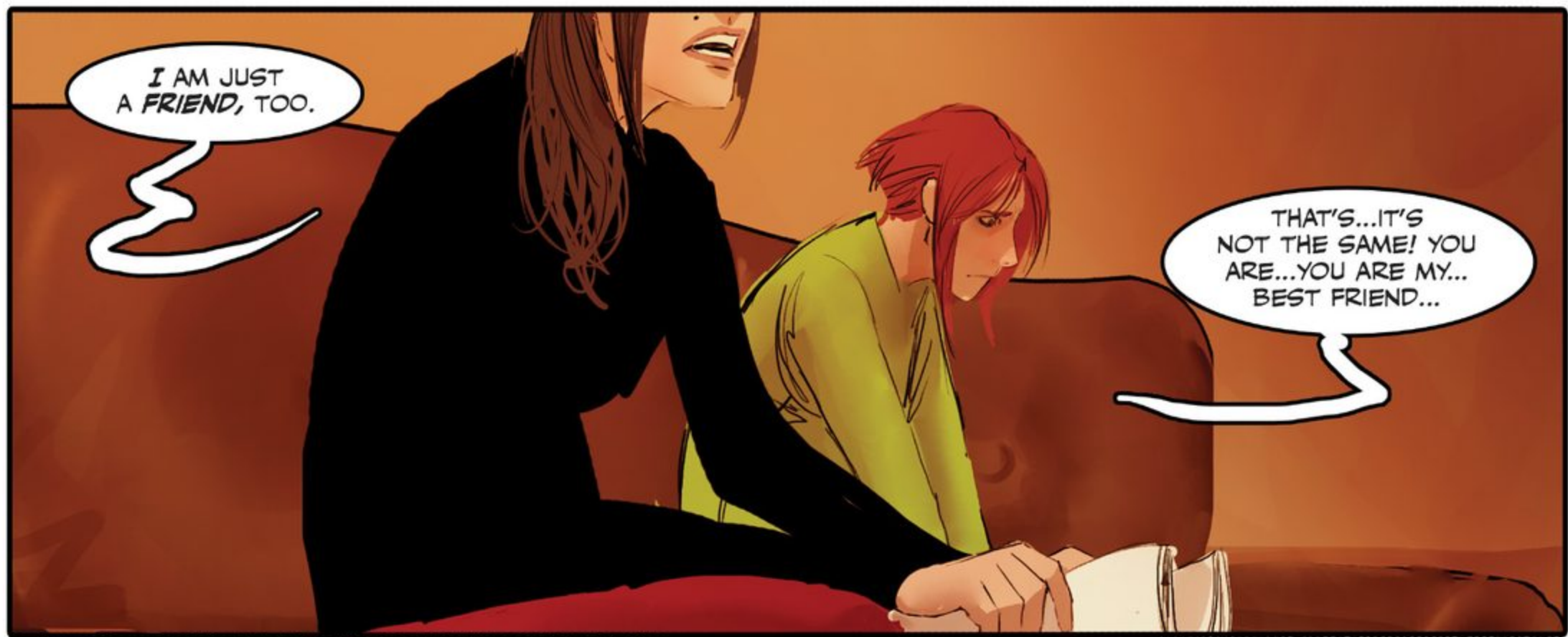
I SAID IT'S OKAY.



ANNE IS JUST A *FRIEND*... YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT?



LISA...

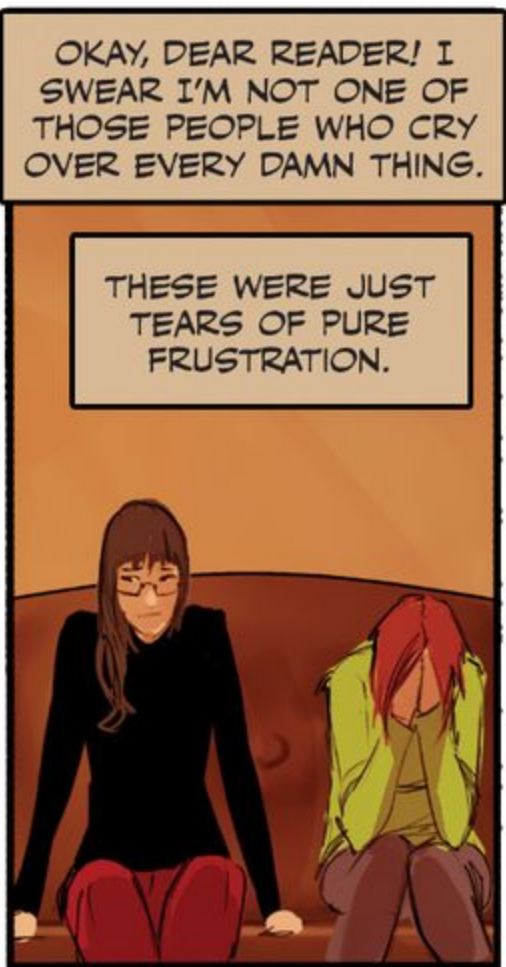


I AM JUST A *FRIEND*, TOO.

THAT'S...IT'S NOT THE SAME! YOU ARE...YOU ARE MY... BEST FRIEND...



I...I AM SO SORRY IF...IF I MADE YOU FEEL LESS...



OKAY, DEAR READER! I SWEAR I'M NOT ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO CRY OVER EVERY DAMN THING.

THESE WERE JUST TEARS OF PURE FRUSTRATION.



SEE, CONTRARY TO ALL MY EFFORTS, ALLY KEPT MISREADING ALL MY SIGNALS. AND EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T KNOW IT BACK THEN...

I WAS DOING THE SAME.



SIGNALS SUCK!



WE HAVE A PERFECTLY FINE, EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND VOCABULARY, AND YET WHEN IT COMES TO EMOTIONS...WE GET REDUCED TO CAVE DWELLERS.

WE BOTH DID OUR BEST TO SIGNAL OUR FEELINGS TO EACH OTHER...

BUT SIGNALS ARE NOTHING MORE THAN LIMITED HINTS OF ONE'S INTENTION.

AT THE END OF THE DAY...MY PIERCINGS WERE JUST AS EASILY DISMISSED AS A SUB'S DEVOTION TO HER DOMME...

ALLY'S OUTBURST OF JEALOUSY OVER THE STORY, NOTHING MORE THAN A POUTING FRIEND OFFENDED BY A REDUCED AMOUNT OF ATTENTION.

SIGNALS WERE ABOUT AS RELIABLE AS OUR ABILITIES TO UNDERSTAND THEIR TRUE INTENTION...

MYEAH...

MEANWHILE HERE YOU ARE, FRIGGIN' MAKIN' IT RAIN! BUYING EXPENSIVE GEAR YOU DON'T EVEN NEED!

I KNOW YOU HAVE FEELINGS FOR HER...BUT... DOES SHE FEEL THE SAME?

THEY TOLD ME NOTHING OF THE IDEA THAT WAS FESTERING IN ALLY'S MIND.

AN IDEA WHICH ALAN FIRST PUT INTO WORDS.

YOU *EVER* FUCKING DOUBT HER AGAIN AND OUR FRIENDSHIP IS *OVER*!

AN IDEA WHICH ALLY SWIFTLY REJECTED AND LEFT TO DIE LIKE A SEED ON BARREN GROUND.

BUT *AN IDEA* IS A *RESILIENT* SEED, AND IT TURNS OUT MY STORY WAS ALL THE NOURISHMENT IT NEEDED TO TAKE ROOT.

I WROTE A STORY OF HER HAVING SEX WITH ANOTHER WOMAN...A REAL PERSON THIS TIME...

SHE KNEW NOTHING OF THE TWO ALLYS. ONE THAT WAS AT THE HEART OF MY SEXUAL DESIRES.

AND OTHER WHO WAS AT THE HEART OF MY HEART...

SHE WAS UNAWARE THAT I NEVER EQUATED THE TWO...SHE ONLY SAW THE STORY I WROTE WITHOUT A TRACE OF HESITATION.

AND...WHY WOULD THERE BE ANY?

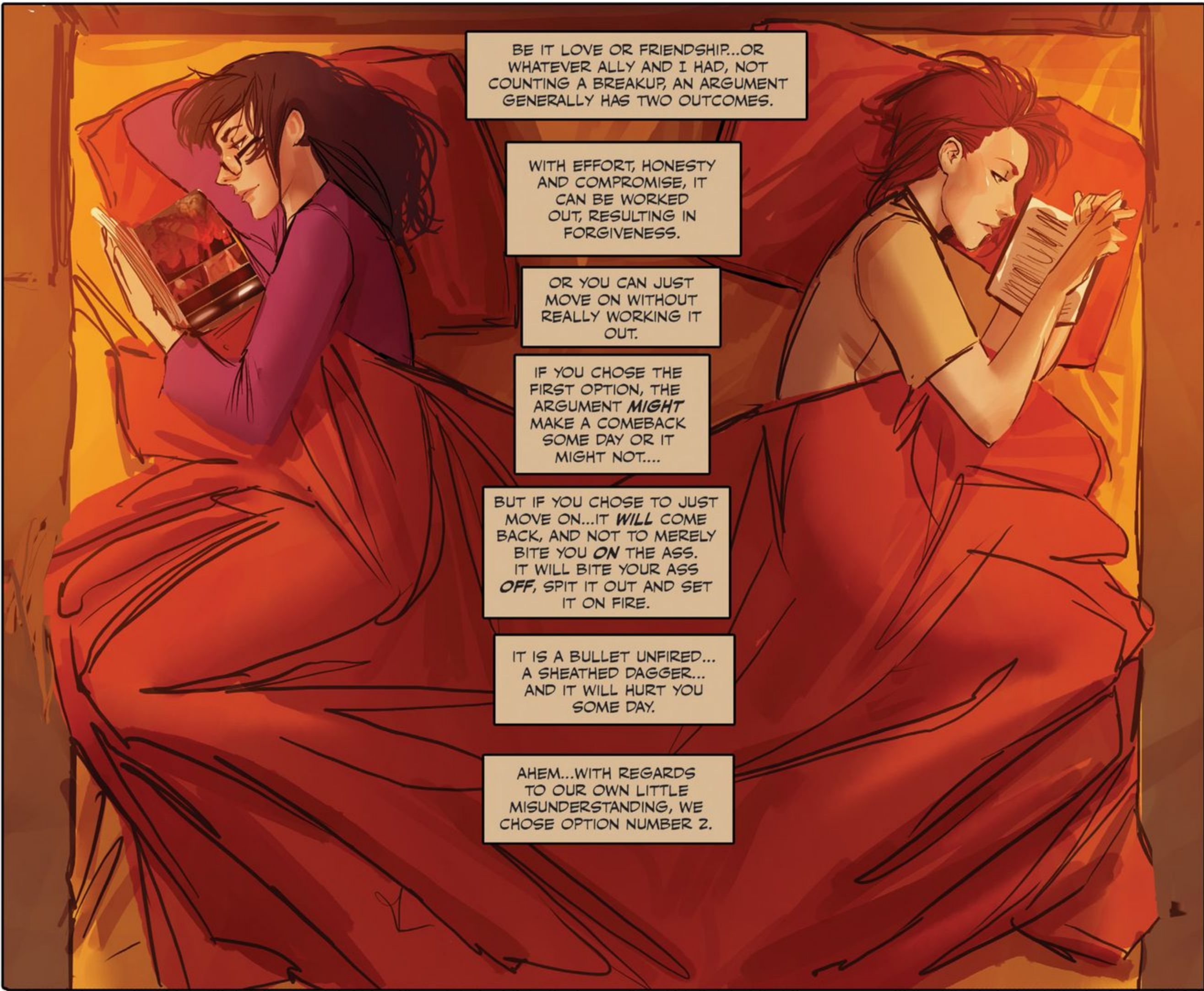
AFTER ALL...

WEREN'T WE...

*JUST FRIENDS?*







BE IT LOVE OR FRIENDSHIP...OR  
WHATEVER ALLY AND I HAD, NOT  
COUNTING A BREAKUP, AN ARGUMENT  
GENERALLY HAS TWO OUTCOMES.

WITH EFFORT, HONESTY  
AND COMPROMISE, IT  
CAN BE WORKED  
OUT, RESULTING IN  
FORGIVENESS.

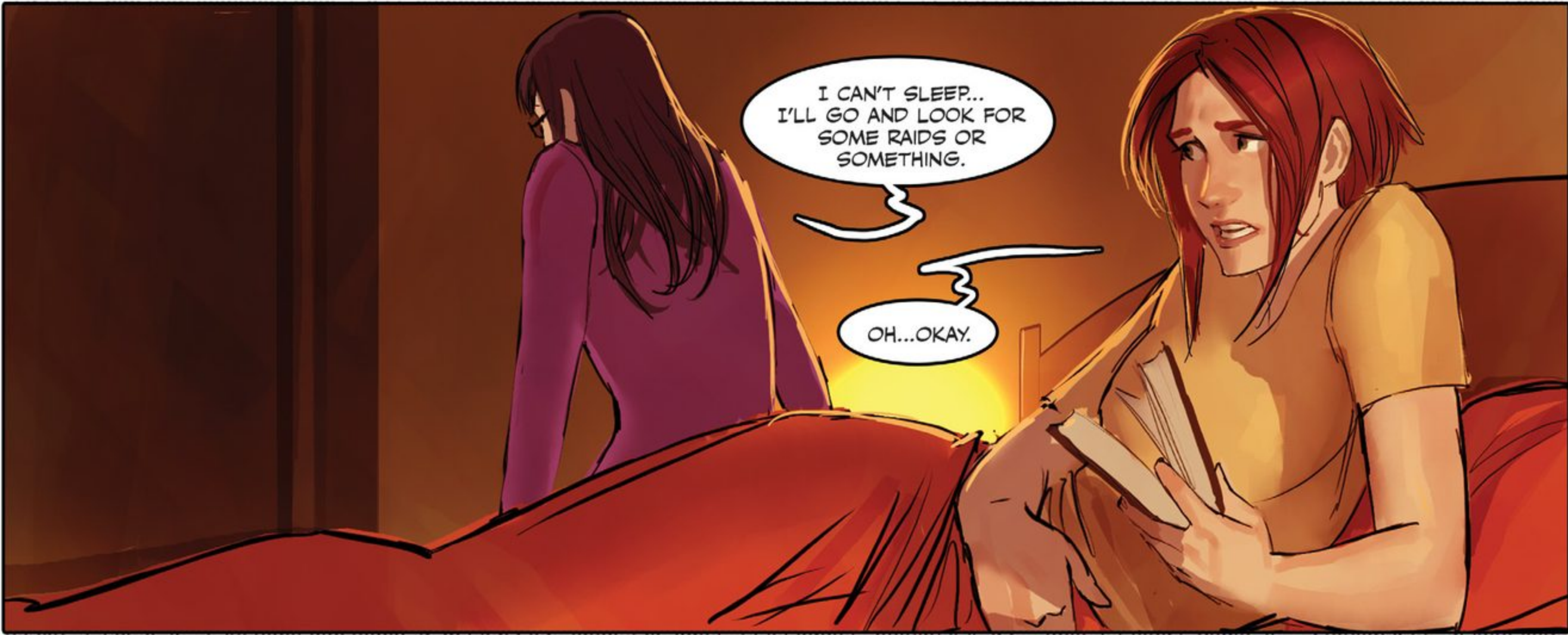
OR YOU CAN JUST  
MOVE ON WITHOUT  
REALLY WORKING IT  
OUT.

IF YOU CHOSE THE  
FIRST OPTION, THE  
ARGUMENT *MIGHT*  
MAKE A COMEBACK  
SOME DAY OR IT  
MIGHT NOT....

BUT IF YOU CHOSE TO JUST  
MOVE ON...IT *WILL* COME  
BACK, AND NOT TO MERELY  
BITE YOU *ON* THE ASS.  
IT WILL BITE YOUR ASS  
*OFF*, SPIT IT OUT AND SET  
IT ON FIRE.

IT IS A BULLET UNFIRED...  
A SHEATHED DAGGER...  
AND IT WILL HURT YOU  
SOME DAY.

AHEM...WITH REGARDS  
TO OUR OWN LITTLE  
MISUNDERSTANDING, WE  
CHOSE OPTION NUMBER 2.



I CAN'T SLEEP...  
I'LL GO AND LOOK FOR  
SOME RAIDS OR  
SOMETHING.

OH...OKAY.



JUST...  
DON'T GO  
CRAZY LOUD  
'KAY?

DON'T WORRY,  
I'LL LIMIT MY RAGE  
TO *WRITING*.

OPTION NUMBER TWO  
USUALLY CAME WITH THAT  
ALL-TOO-FAMILIAR PERK OF  
PASSIVE-AGGRESSION.



PEOPLE SAY YOU SHOULDN'T GO TO BED ANGRY...SO ALLY DIDN'T.

SHE SPENT THAT NIGHT IN HER ROOM...NEVER WENT TO BED.

BUT IN THE MORNING, SHE SEEMED FINE AGAIN.

MORNING!  
SORRY, I WAS UP LATE AND I DIDN'T WANT TO WAKE YOU UP!

OH...S'ALRIGHT!

THURSDAY WAS A NICE DAY; UNEVENTFUL, BUT NICE.

ALLY WAS BACK TO HER OLD SELF.

AND BY THE END OF IT, I FORGOT THE WHOLE STORY THING...

FRIDAY, HOWEVER, ALLY MADE IT QUITE CLEAR THAT SHE HAD NOT.

HEY, ALLY, MOVE IT OR LOSE IT!

NOW, NOW LISA...

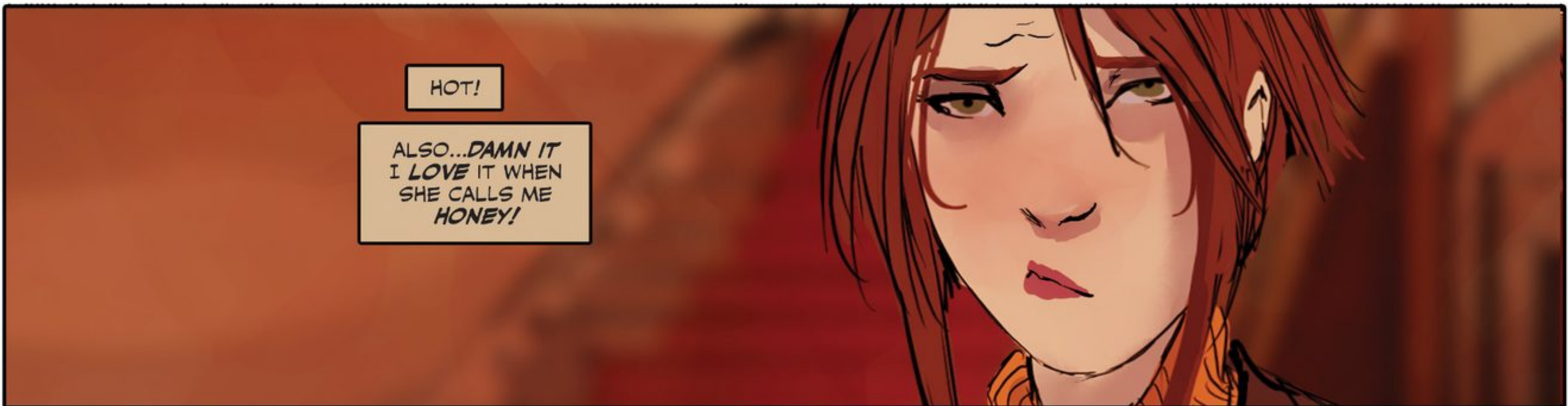
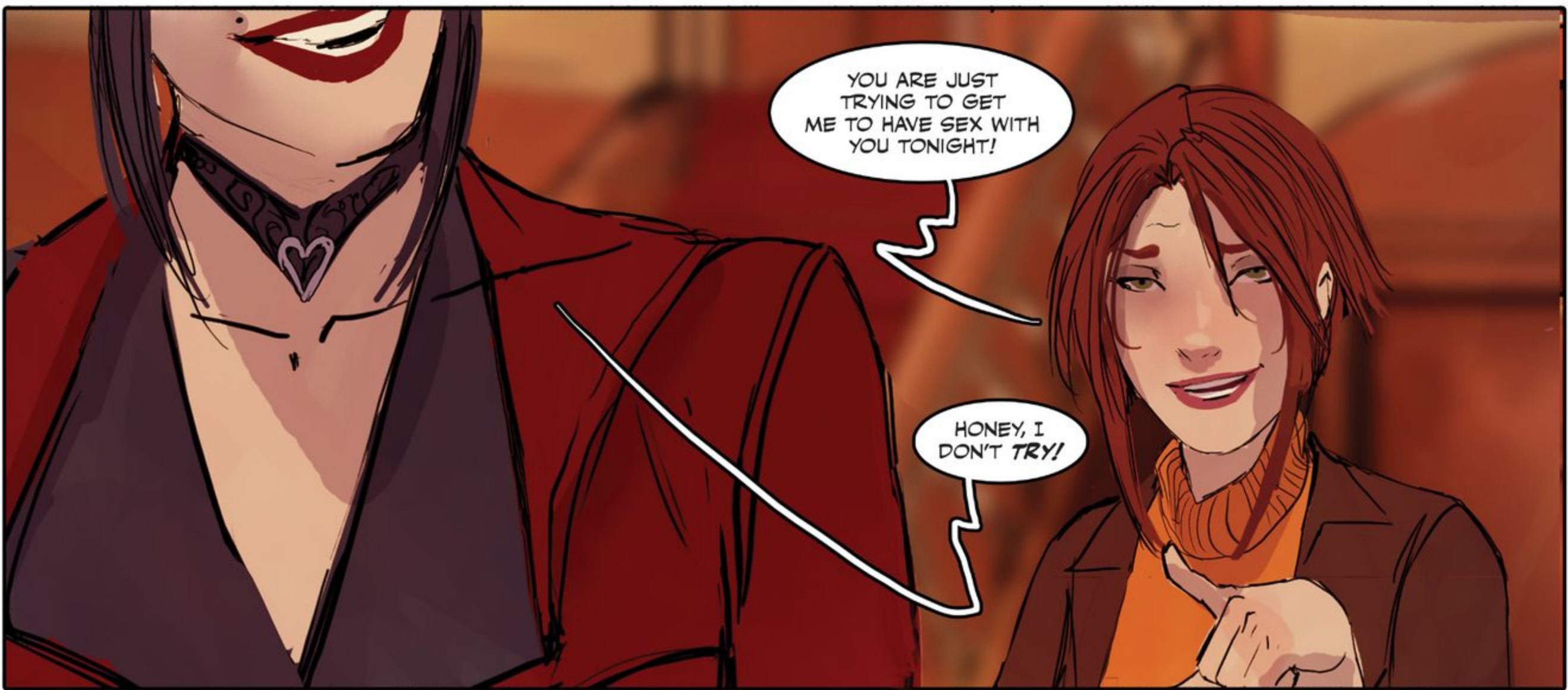
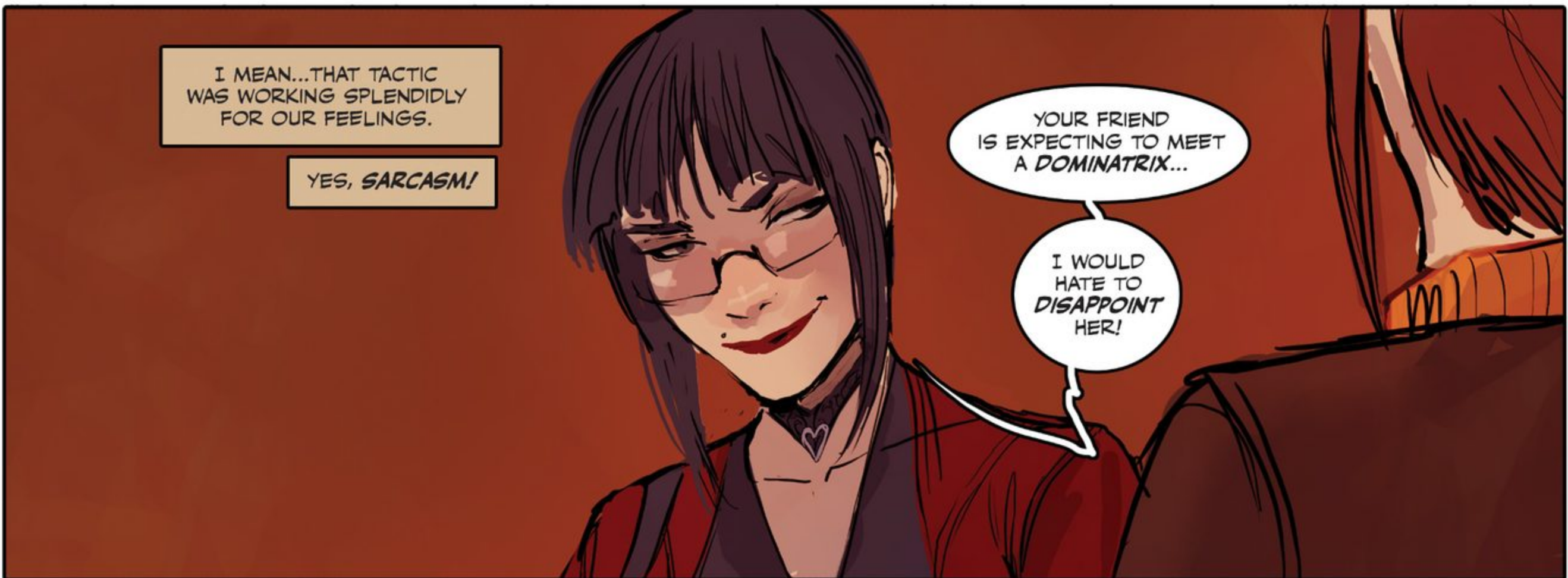
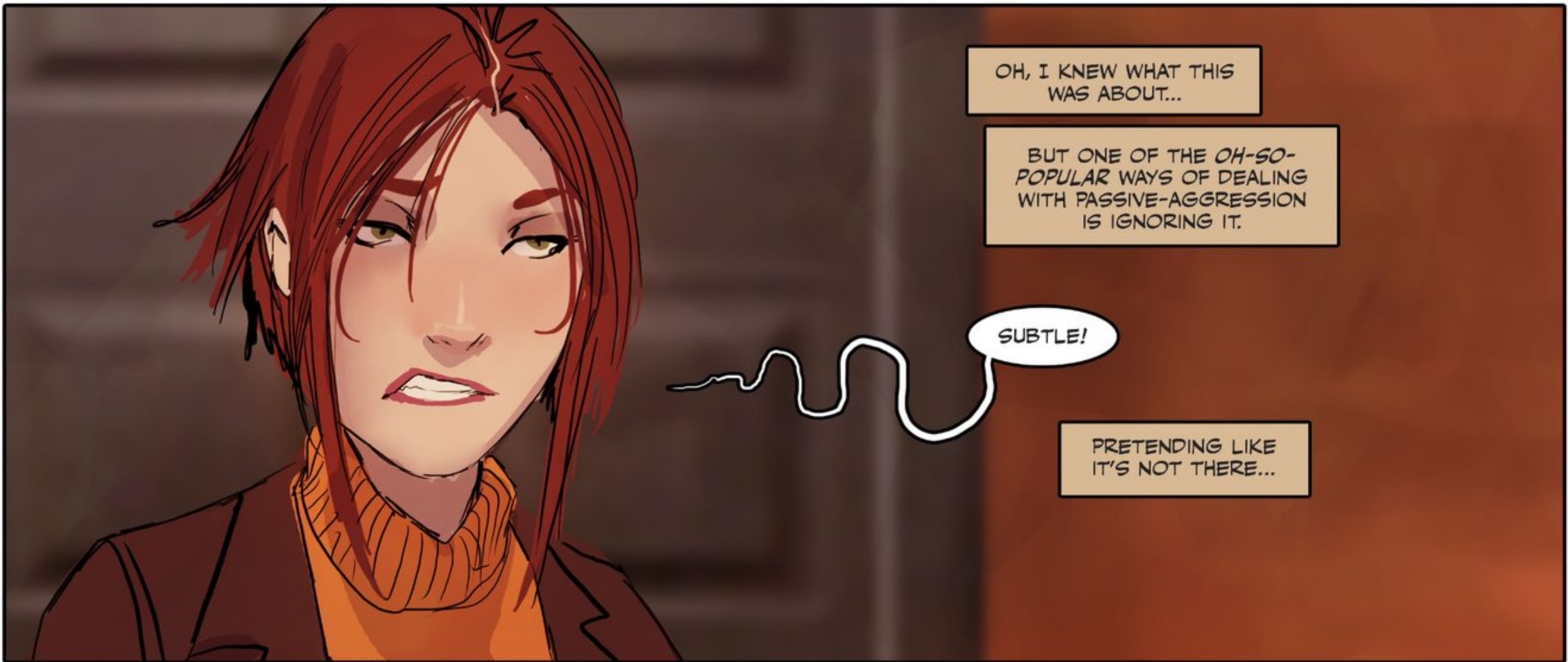


A full-page comic panel featuring a woman with dark hair and bangs, wearing glasses, a red corset with a black choker, and black gloves. She is standing between two large, thick chains that are draped over a wooden floor. The background is a solid red color. A speech bubble is positioned above her head, and a text box is in the bottom right corner.

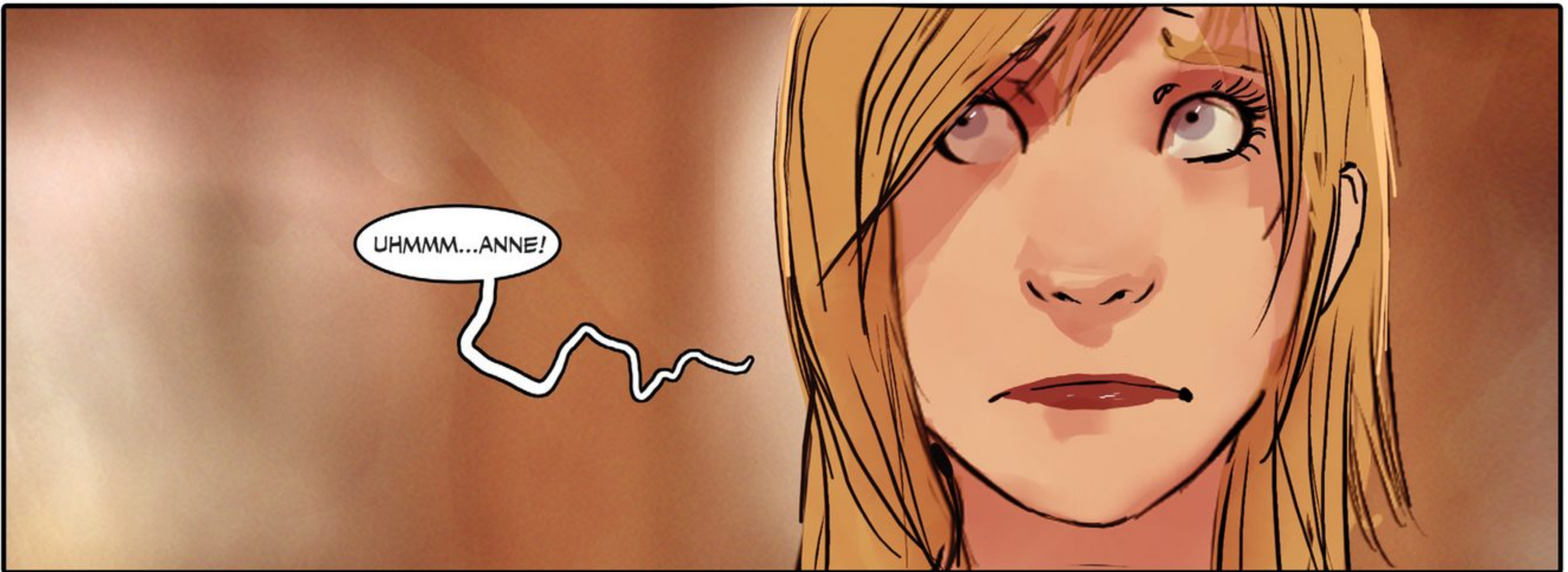
HAVEN'T YOU  
EVER HEARD OF  
BEING "FASHIONABLY  
LATE?"

AH, PASSIVE-AGGRESSION...  
WHEN YOU COULD SAY  
WHAT BOTHERS YOU, BUT  
INSTEAD YOU CHOOSE  
TO BE A BIT OF A  
*DICK* ABOUT IT...

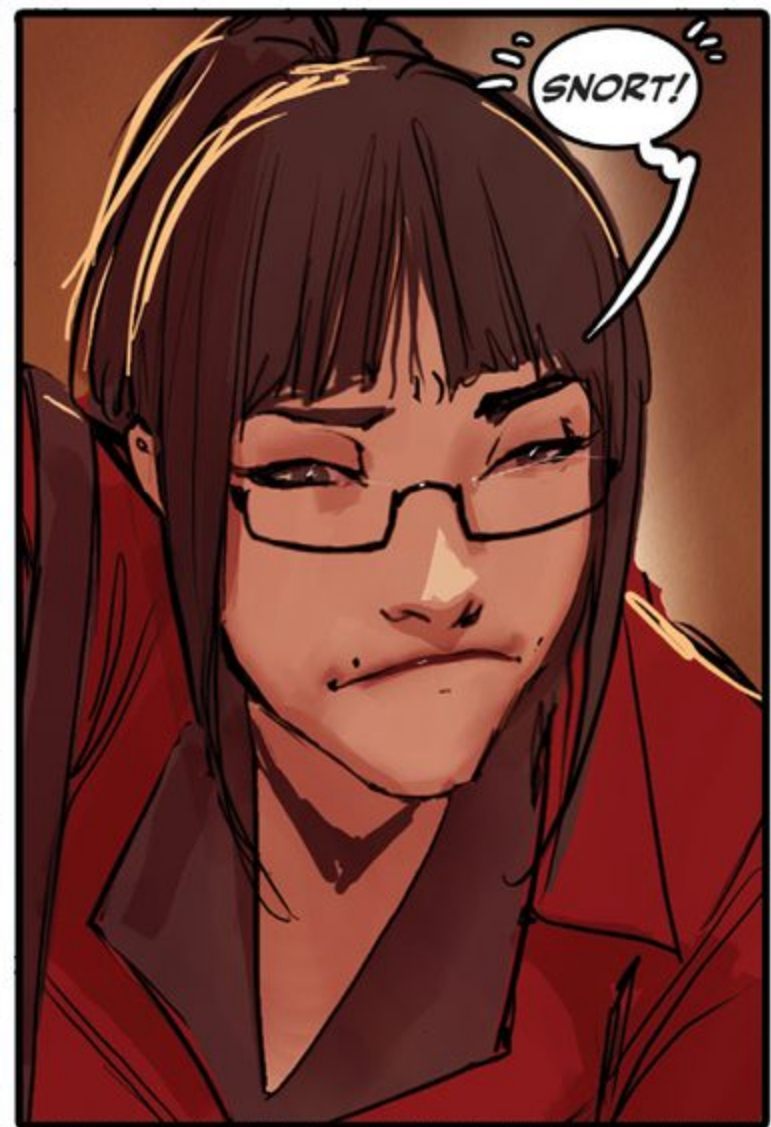
















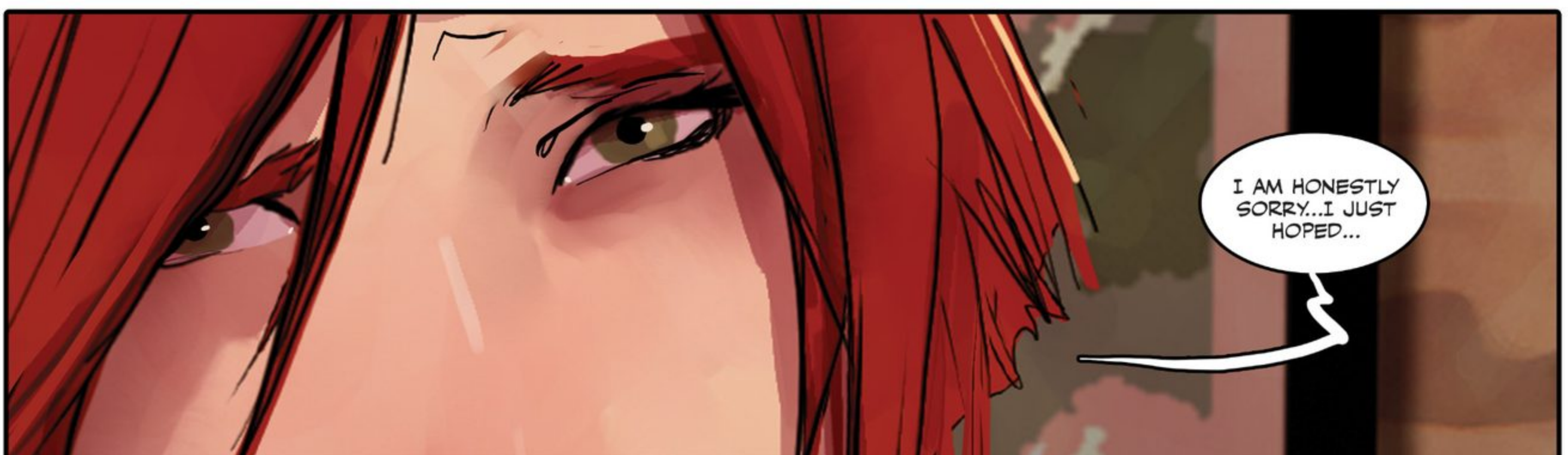
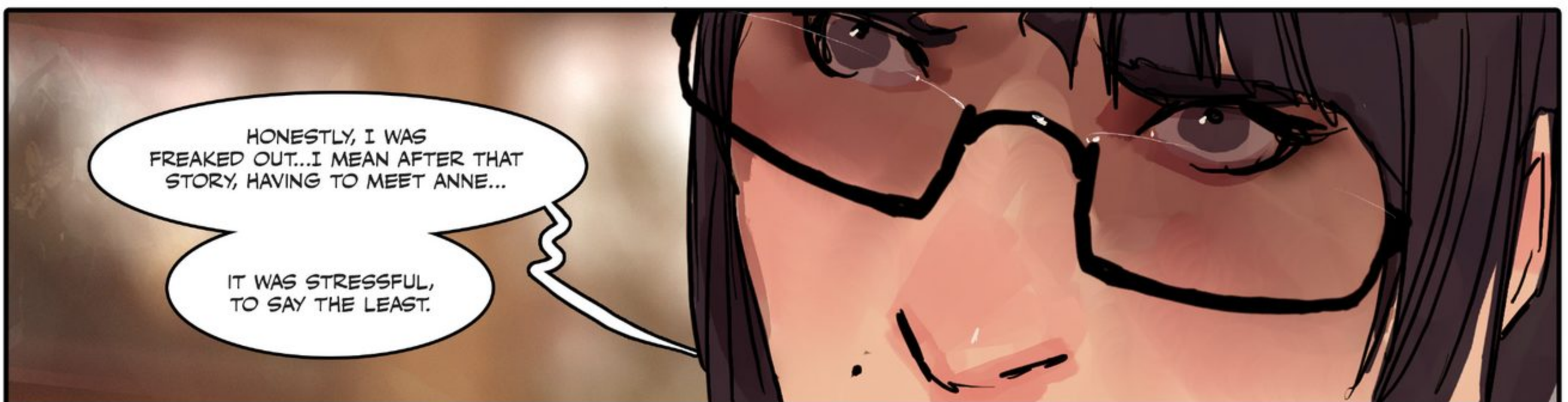
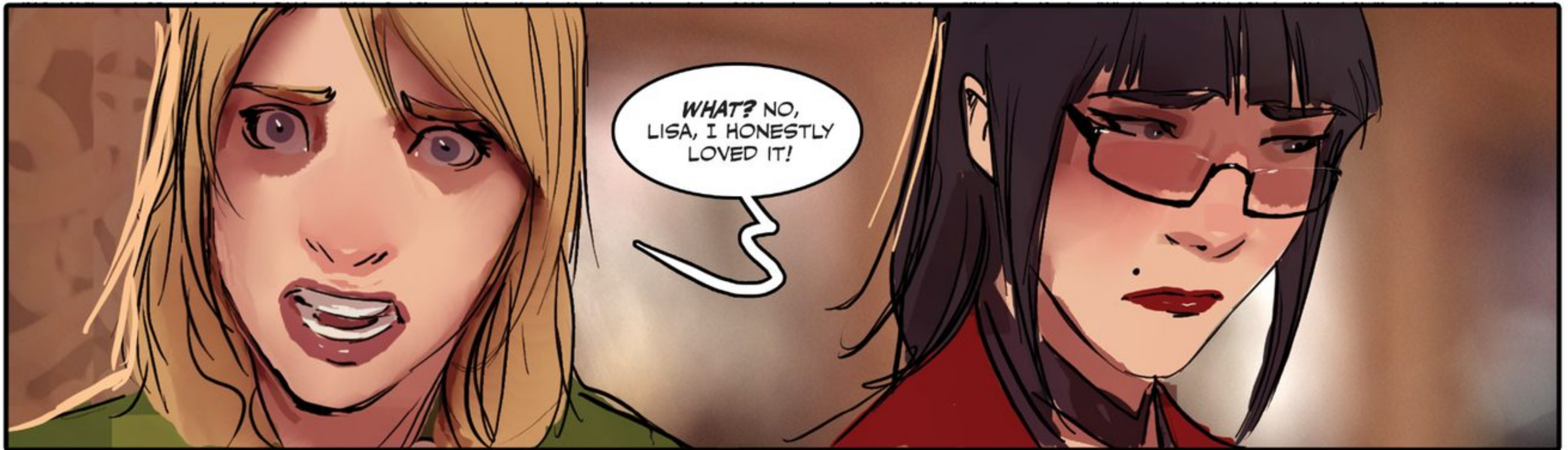








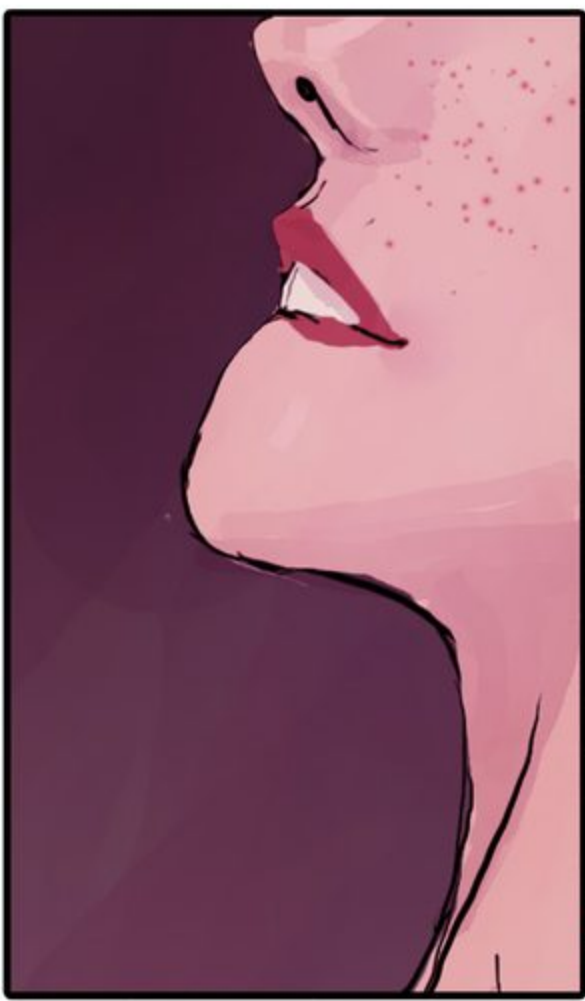




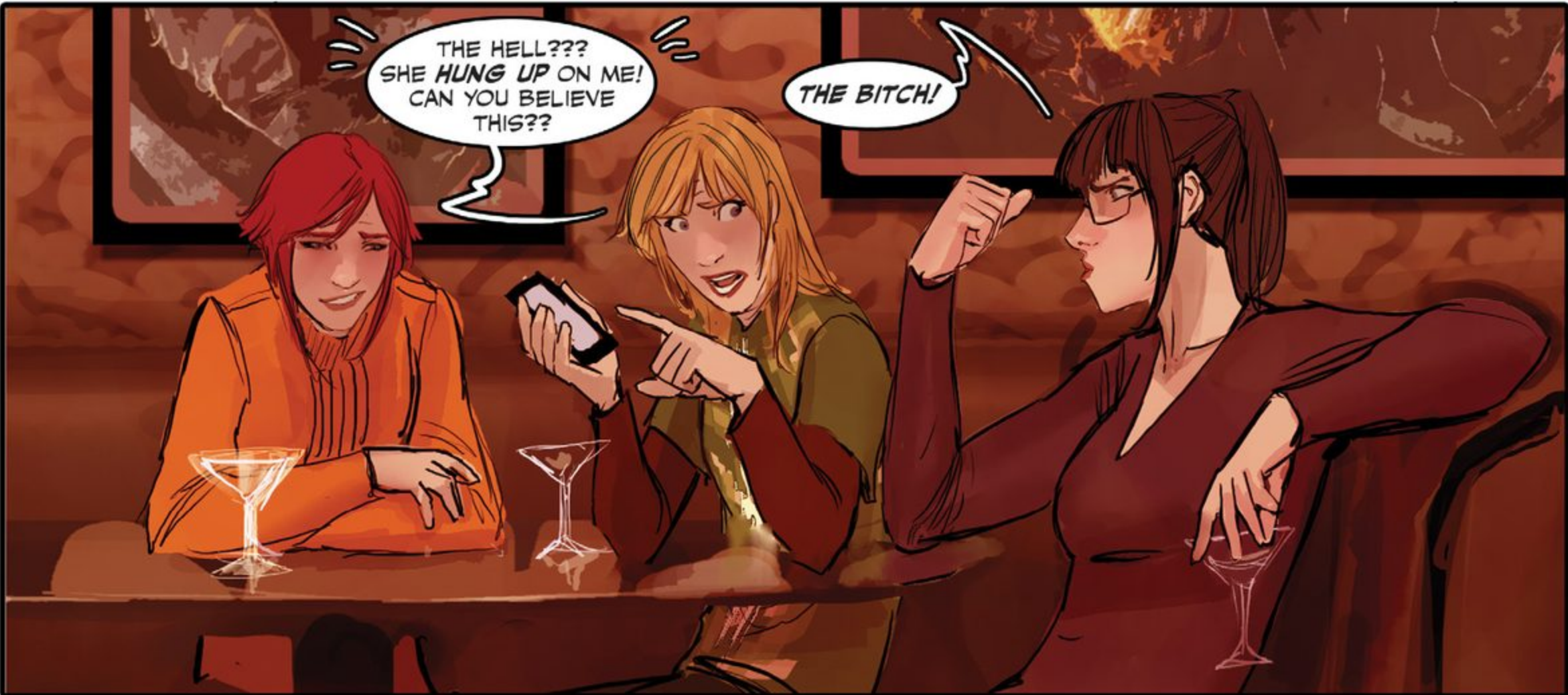
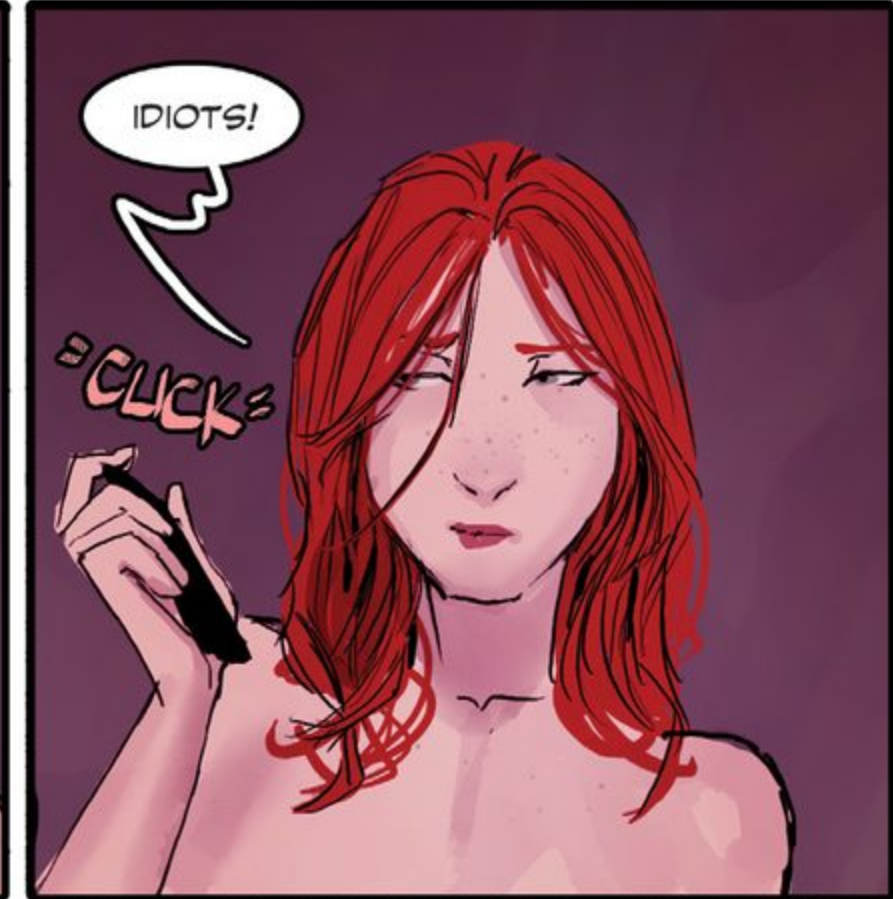
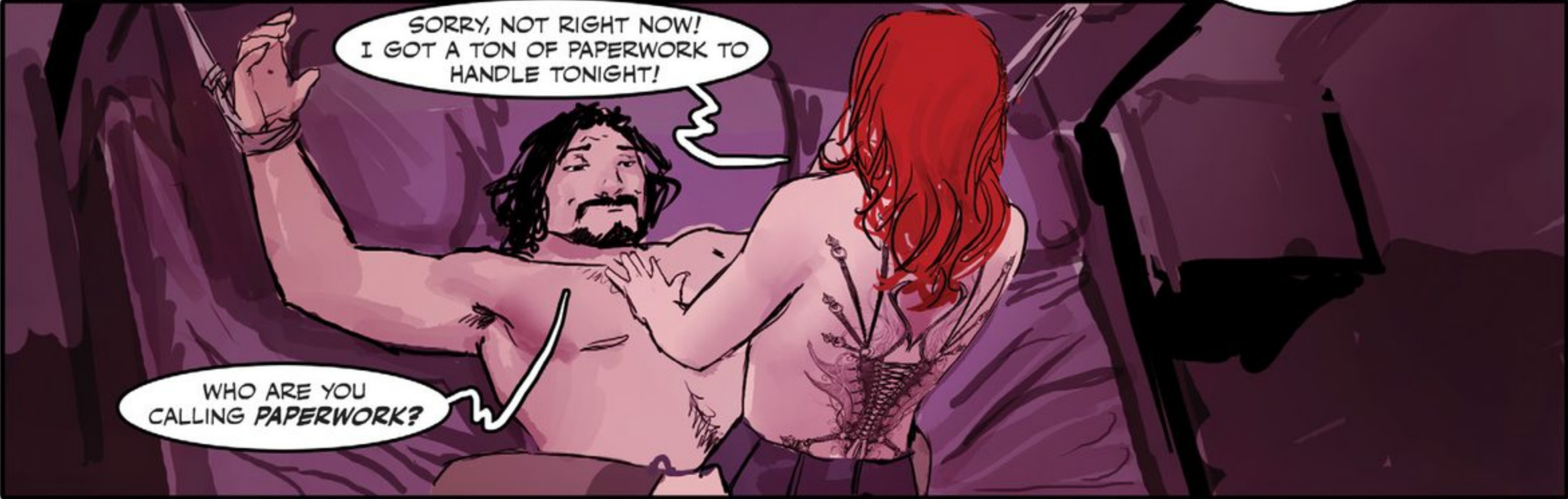
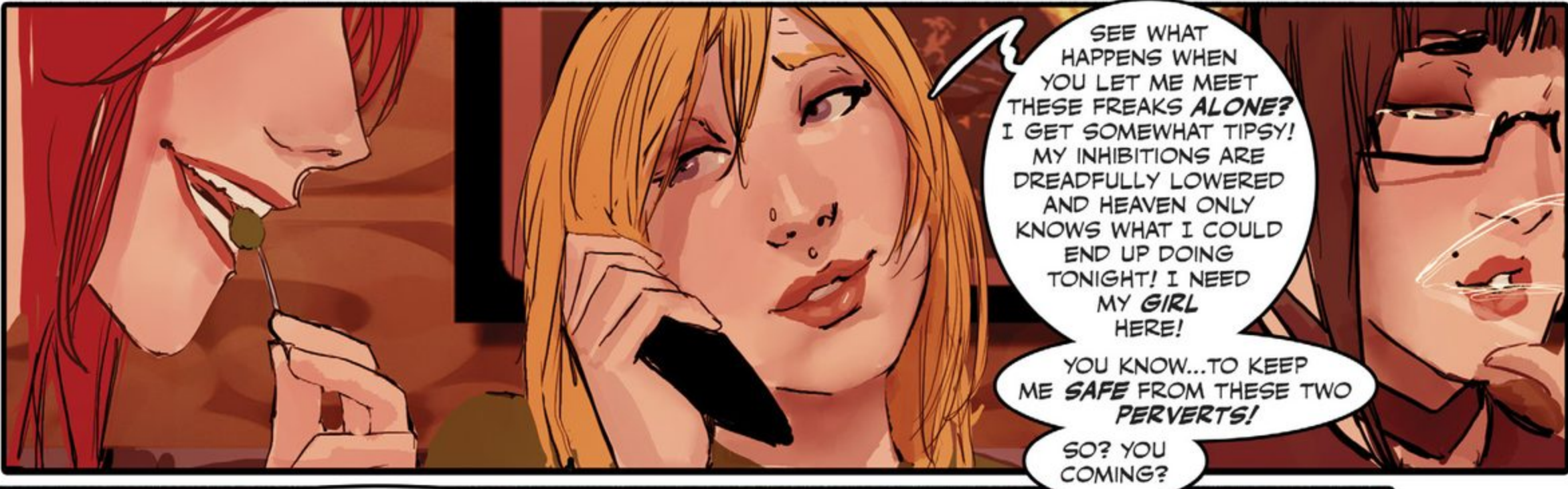




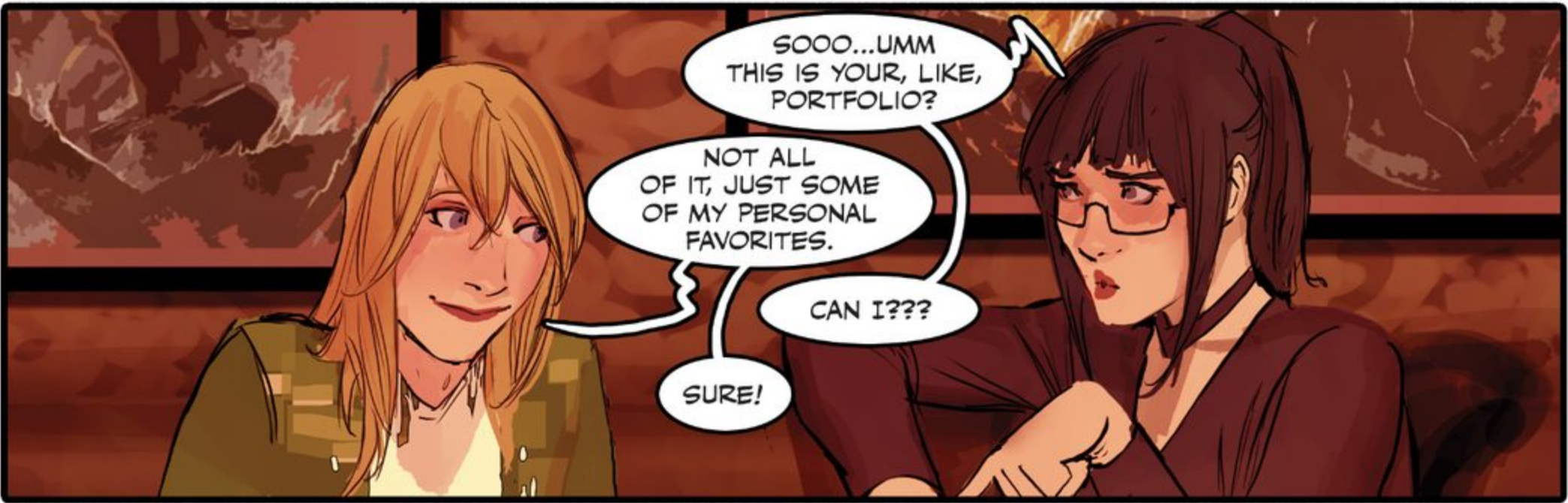
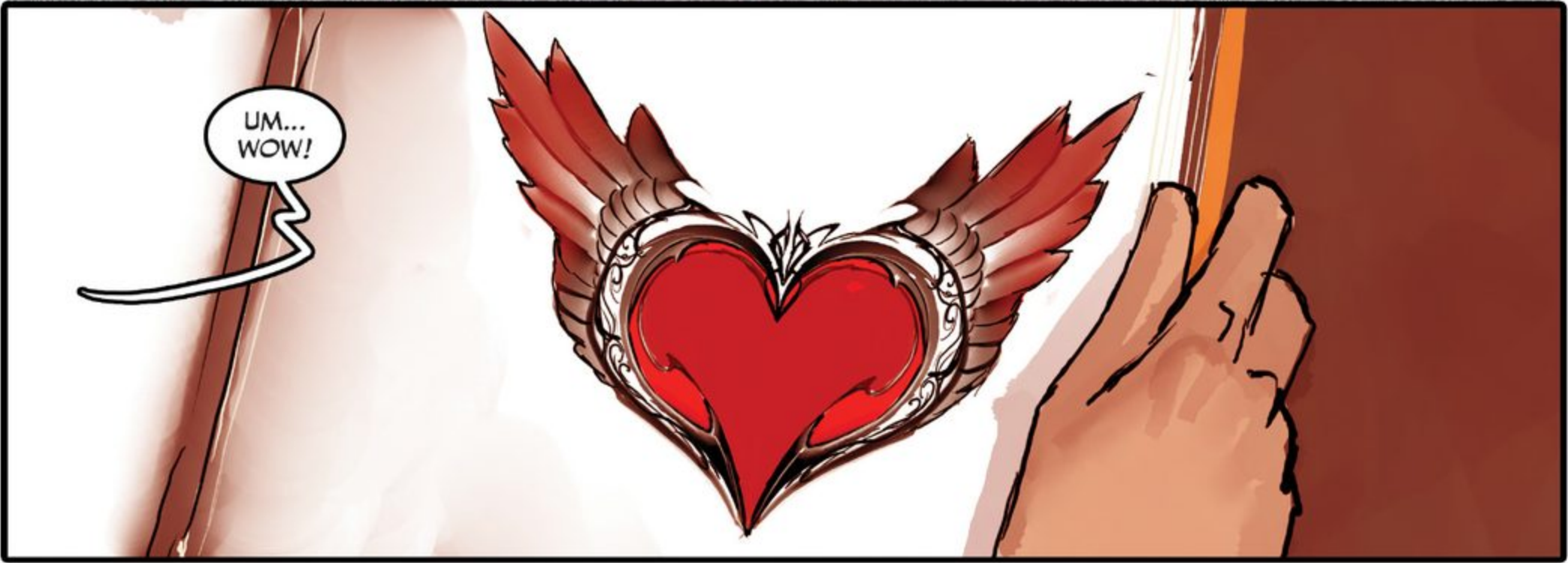












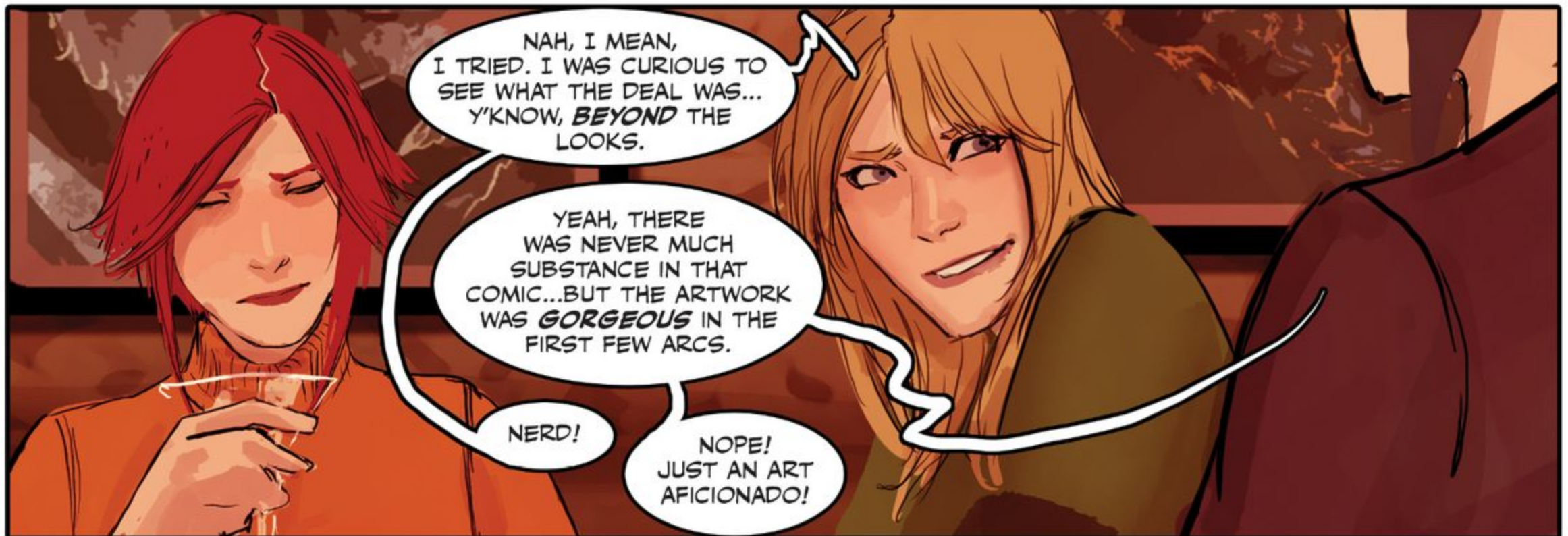




HEY! I *KNOW* THIS COMIC!!!

YEAH, I GET A BUTTLOAD OF ORDERS TO TATTOO HER.

HEH. I BET! YOU *READ* IT?



NAH, I MEAN, I TRIED. I WAS CURIOUS TO SEE WHAT THE DEAL WAS... Y'KNOW, *BEYOND* THE LOOKS.

YEAH, THERE WAS NEVER MUCH SUBSTANCE IN THAT COMIC...BUT THE ARTWORK WAS *GORGEOUS* IN THE FIRST FEW ARCS.

NERD!

NOPE! JUST AN ART AFICIONADO!



BUT IF YOU WANT TO READ SOME GOOD COMICS WITH STORY TO GO ALONGSIDE ART...

IT'S KINDA FUNNY...

ONE OF THE THINGS I REMEMBER ABOUT THAT NIGHT WAS A DEEP SENSE OF UNEASE.

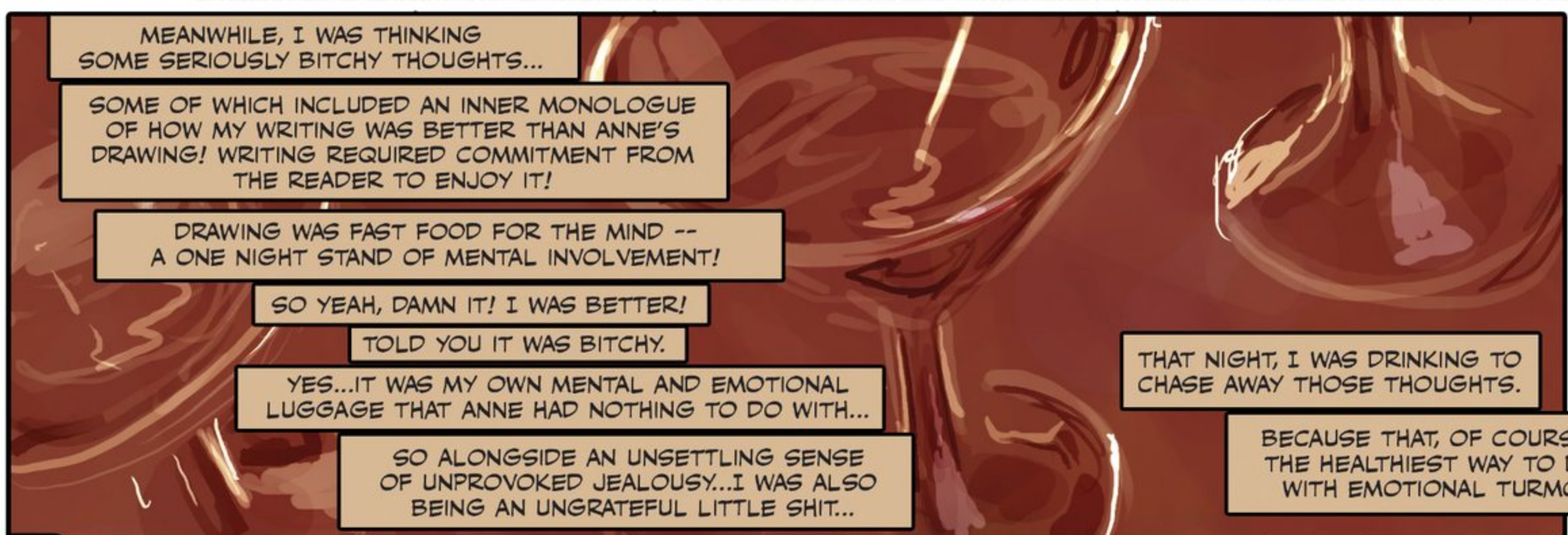
I GUESS, WHEN YOU ARE TRYING TO GET INVOLVED WITH SOMEONE ROMANTICALLY, THE LAST THING YOU WANT IS THE COMPANY OF SOMEONE WHO HAS MORE IN COMMON WITH THAT PERSON.



AND ANNE CERTAINLY QUALIFIED.

SHE WAS BOTH INTO BDSM, FUN, AND AMAZINGLY ARTISTIC.

AND ALLY OBVIOUSLY ENJOYED HER COMPANY.



MEANWHILE, I WAS THINKING SOME SERIOUSLY BITCHY THOUGHTS...

SOME OF WHICH INCLUDED AN INNER MONOLOGUE OF HOW MY WRITING WAS BETTER THAN ANNE'S DRAWING! WRITING REQUIRED COMMITMENT FROM THE READER TO ENJOY IT!

DRAWING WAS FAST FOOD FOR THE MIND -- A ONE NIGHT STAND OF MENTAL INVOLVEMENT!

SO YEAH, DAMN IT! I WAS BETTER!

TOLD YOU IT WAS BITCHY.

YES...IT WAS MY OWN MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL LUGGAGE THAT ANNE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH...

SO ALONGSIDE AN UNSETTLING SENSE OF UNPROVOKED JEALOUSY...I WAS ALSO BEING AN UNGRATEFUL LITTLE SHIT...

THAT NIGHT, I WAS DRINKING TO CHASE AWAY THOSE THOUGHTS.

BECAUSE THAT, OF COURSE, IS THE HEALTHIEST WAY TO DEAL WITH EMOTIONAL TURMOIL.





ALCOHOL DID WONDERS AS A SOCIAL LUBRICANT, THOUGH.

YOU FOUND A BUNCH OF MARTINIS...AND YOU FORGET A CERTAIN STEAMY STORY.

BUUUT...AS ALLY WOULD SAY...THEY RAISE YOUR STUPIDITY STAT BY 10 POINTS!

NO, SERIOUSLY, WE GOTTA CALL HER AGAIN!

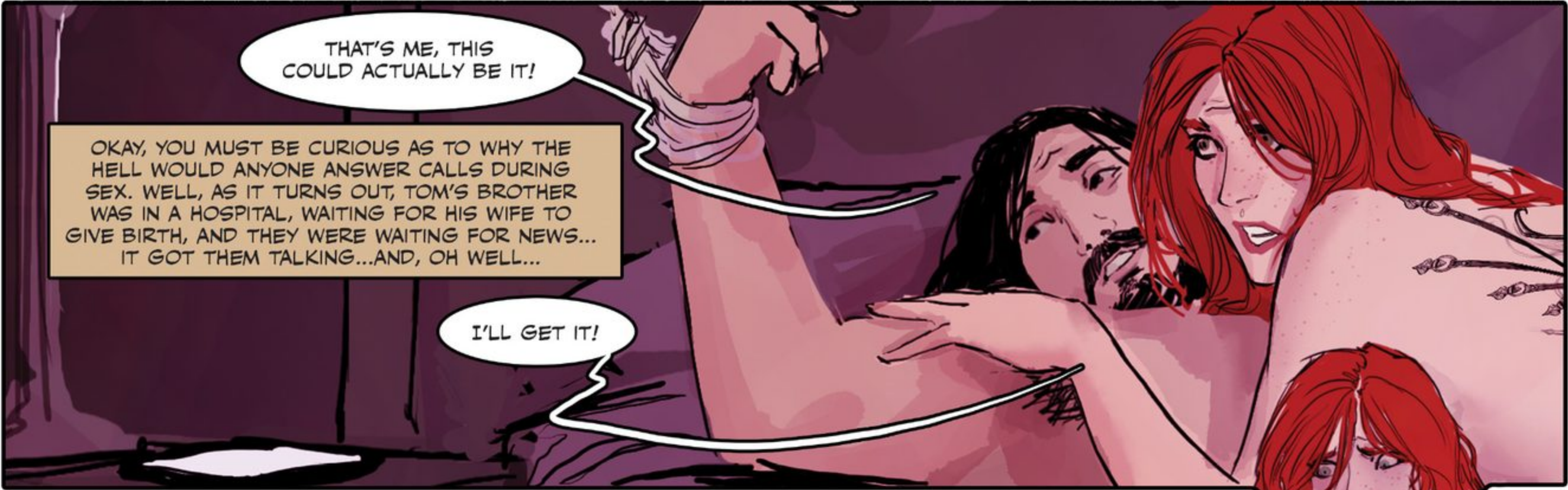
SHE WON'T ANSWER!



I KNOW! YOU CALL TOM! FROM MY PHONE!

TOM?

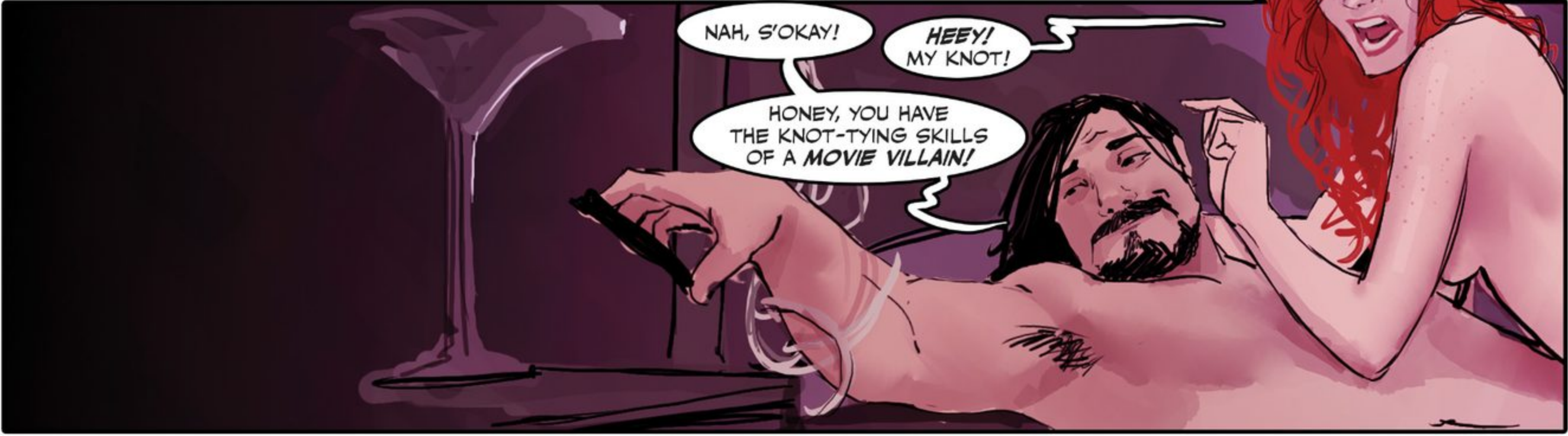
YEAH! AND YOU TELL HIM TO PUT HER ON!



THAT'S ME, THIS COULD ACTUALLY BE IT!

OKAY, YOU MUST BE CURIOUS AS TO WHY THE HELL WOULD ANYONE ANSWER CALLS DURING SEX. WELL, AS IT TURNS OUT, TOM'S BROTHER WAS IN A HOSPITAL, WAITING FOR HIS WIFE TO GIVE BIRTH, AND THEY WERE WAITING FOR NEWS... IT GOT THEM TALKING...AND, OH WELL...

I'LL GET IT!



NAH, S'OKAY!

HEEY! MY KNOT!

HONEY, YOU HAVE THE KNOT-TYING SKILLS OF A MOVIE VILLAIN!



AN UNKNOWN NUMBER?



HELLO!?

OH...

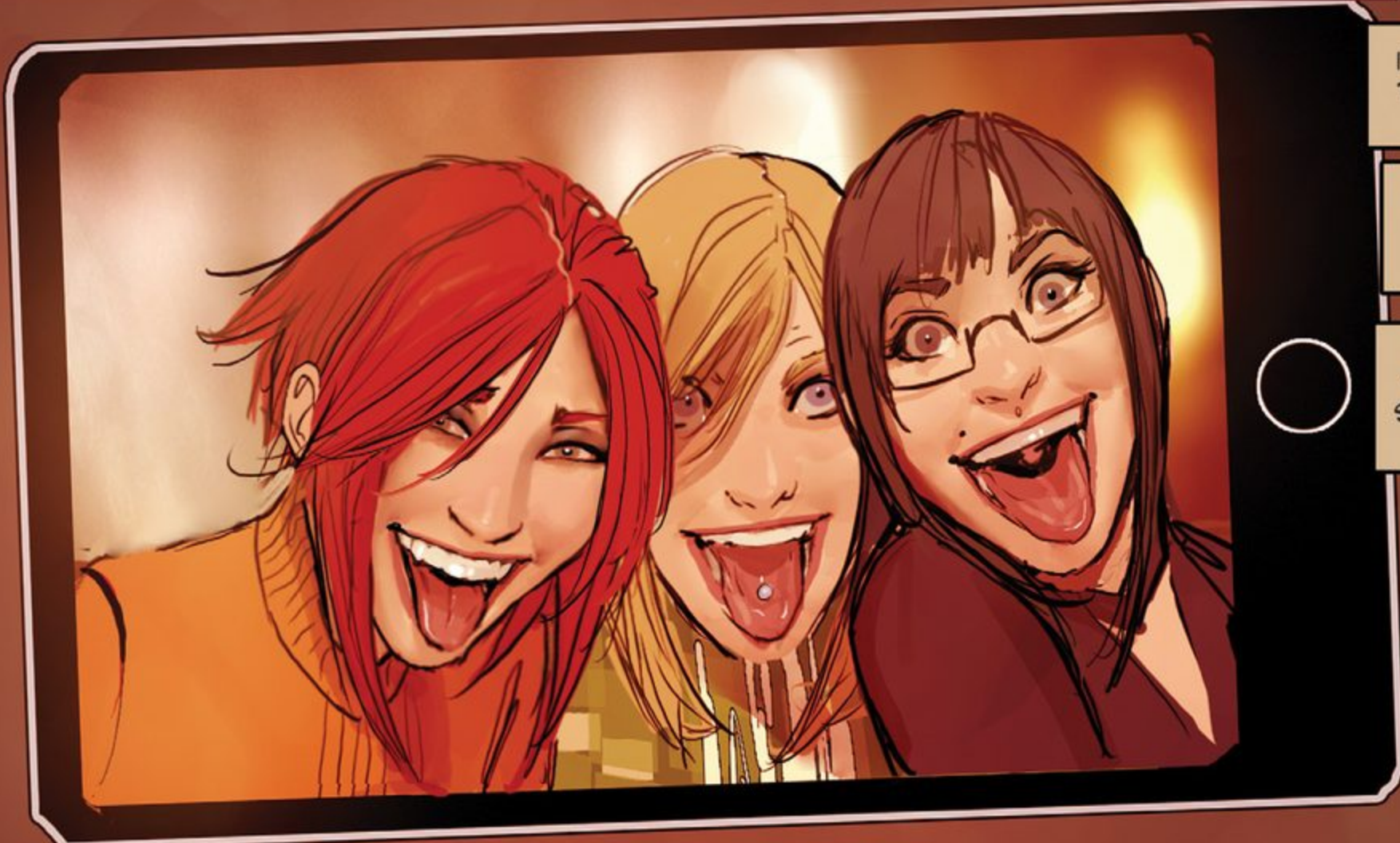
YEAH...

UHUH, SHE'S HERE!









IT WAS THE NIGHT THE  
THREE OF US BECAME  
FRIENDS.

AND YES, WE SENT  
THIS PHOTO TO  
CASSIE...

SHE MADE IT INTO A  
T-SHIRT WITH A SIGN  
SAYING "THREE GIRLS,  
ONE BRAIN."

SHE LOVES  
THAT T-SHIRT!

SO, ANYWAY...

NEXT MORNING...

MMNNNNNN.....

OH, FUCK...  
GOTTA *WORK!*

TO QUOTE ABOUT A MILLION MOVIES...

NO, REALLY, IT'S NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE!





OOKAY?



THAT'S... NEW.



WELL...



AT LEAST MY DROOLY PRINCESS IS HERE, AS WELL.



SOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO...  
THE HELL HAPPENED LAST NIGHT?



OOKAY BRAIN, IT'S YOU AND ME NOW! DO YOUR *THING!*



SEE YOU GUYS! I'LL GO HOME IN MY CAR THAT I HAVE OR SOMETHING!

NO! FRIENDS DON'T LET FRIENDS DRIVE DRUNK AND BLAH!



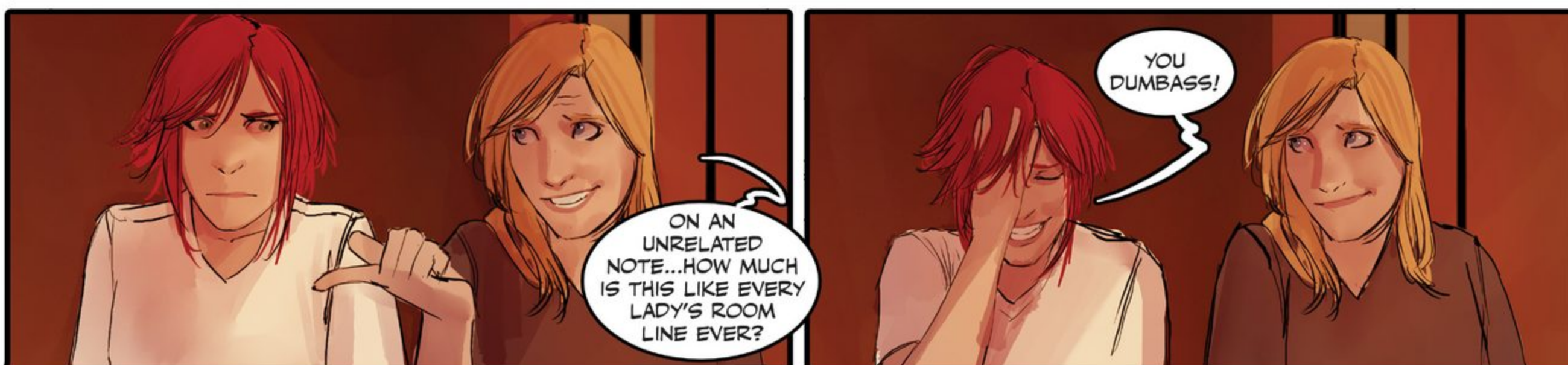
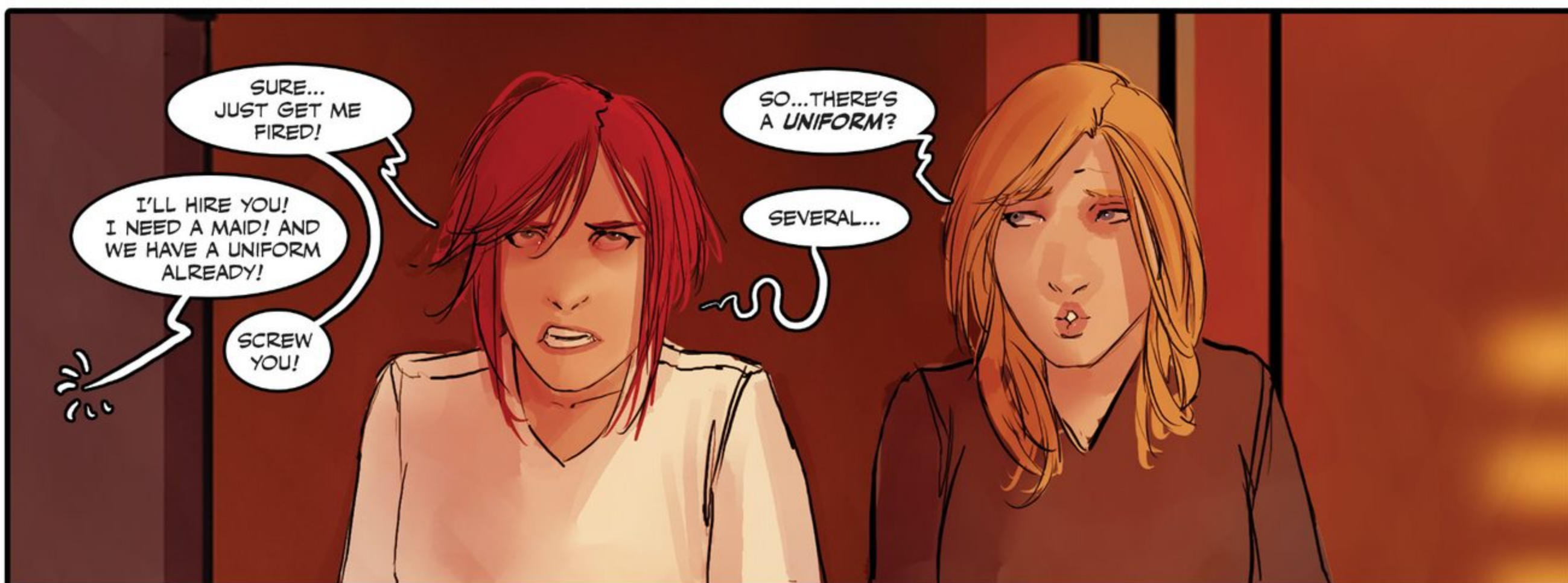
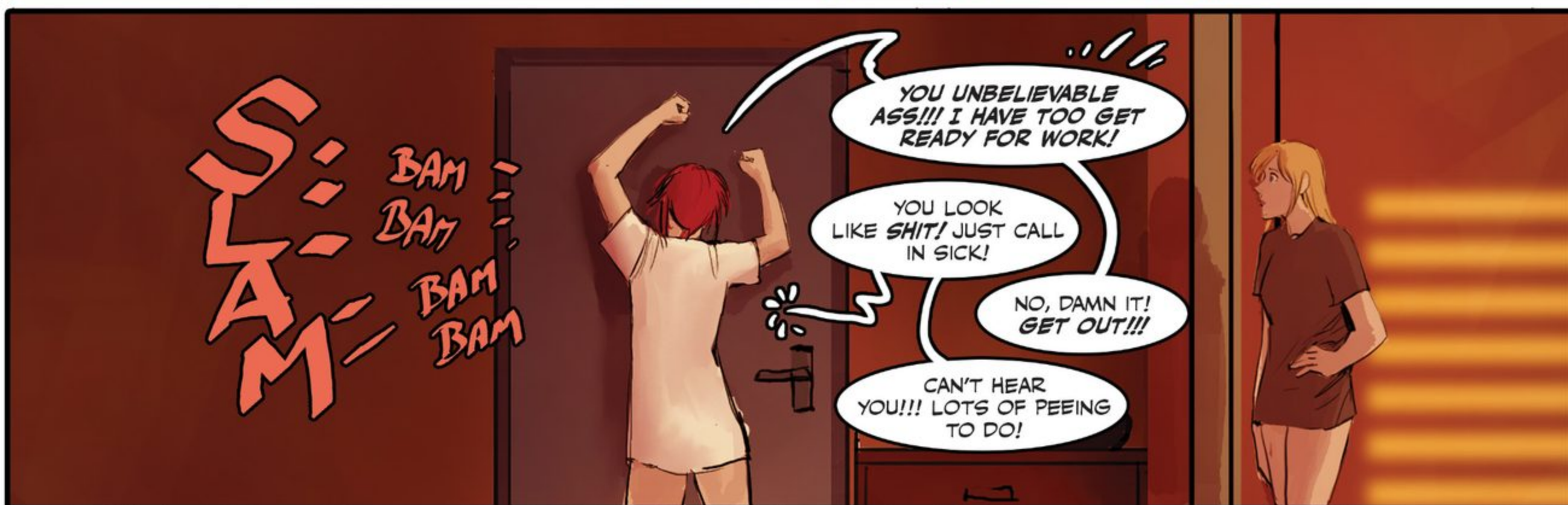
OUR PLACE IS CLOSE AND I HAVE A SPARE ROOM!

YAY...AND STUFF!

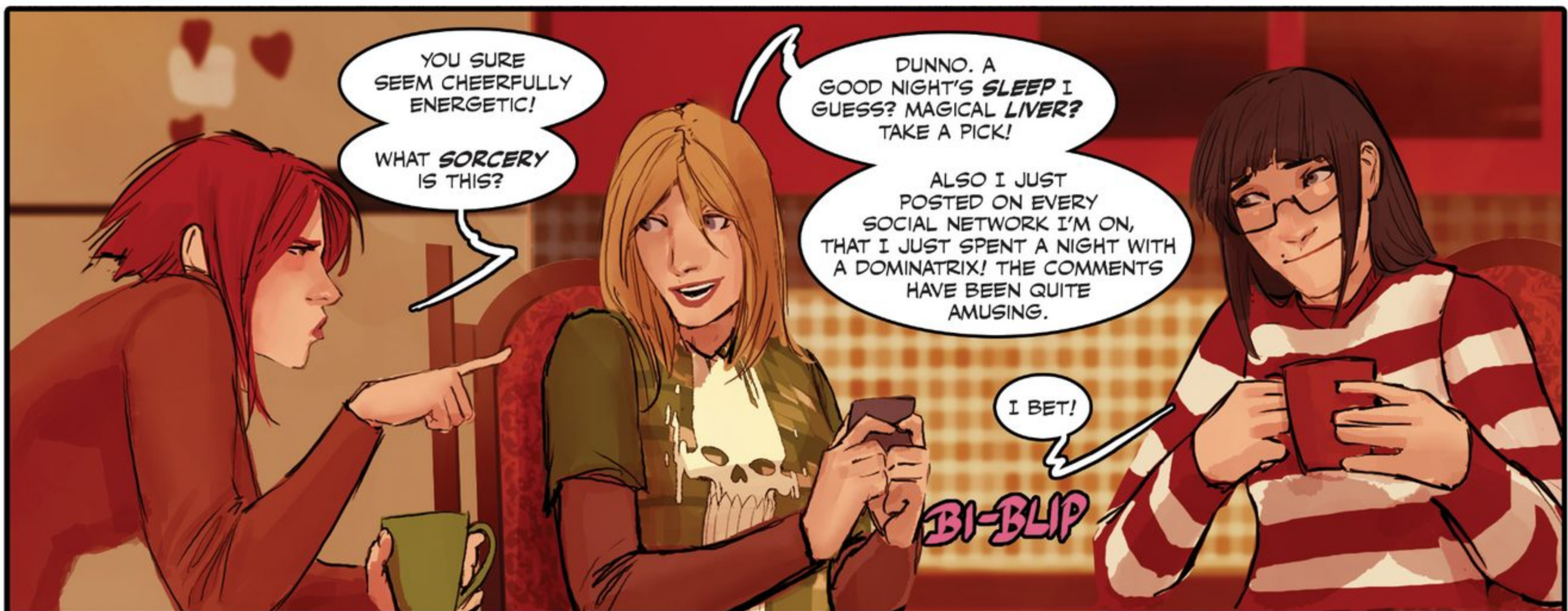




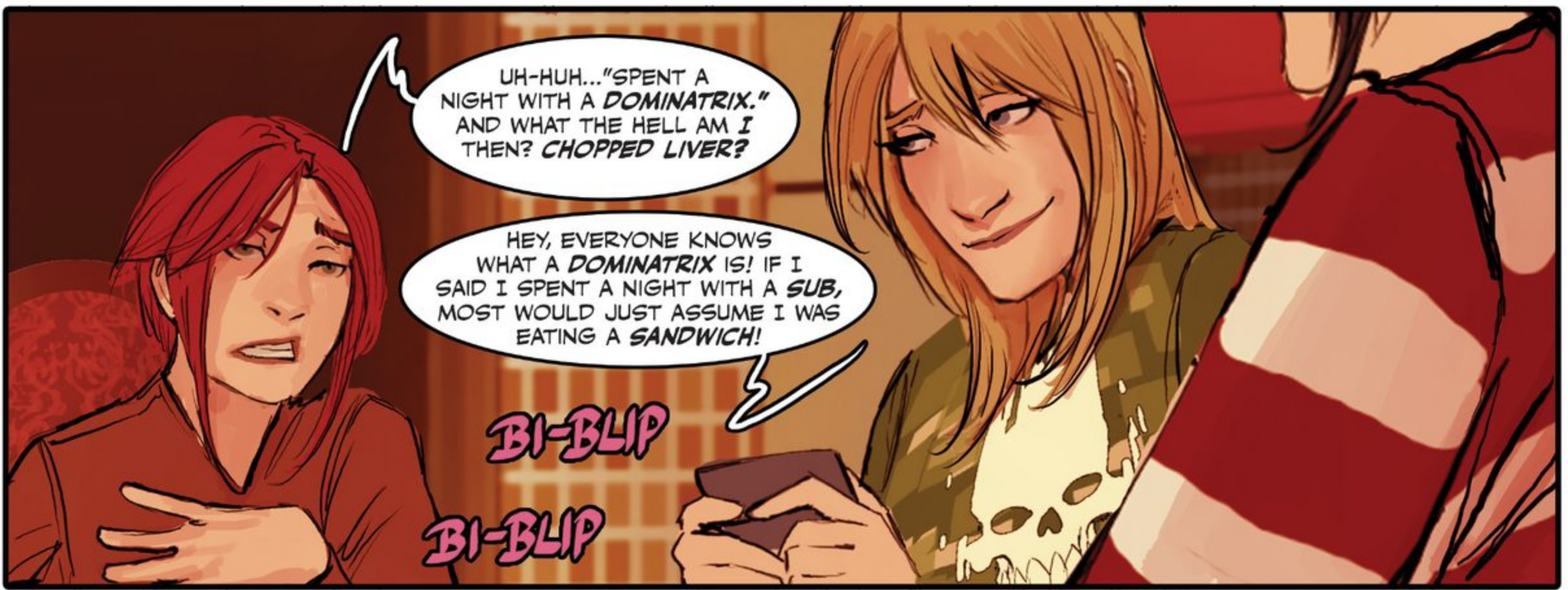




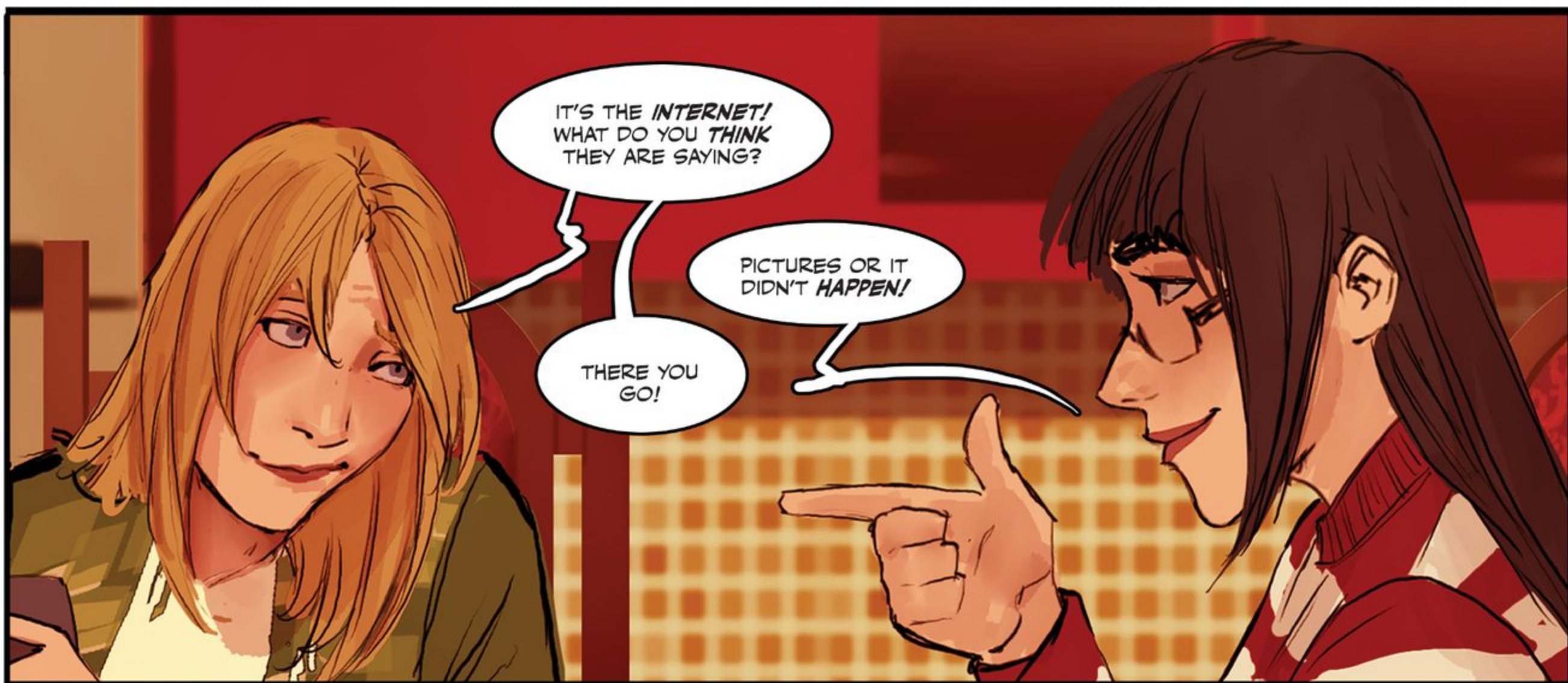














I WOULD HAVE FOUND ANNE'S OBSESSIVE  
CURIOSITY ON THE TOPIC OF BDSM FUNNY...

BUT THEN AGAIN, I WAS IN THAT SAME  
INEXPERIENCED POSITION JUST A FEW  
WEEKS EARLIER...

THAT REALIZATION KEPT ME FROM  
CHUCKLING AT ANNE'S CURIOSITY.

WE TALKED FOR *HOURS*...ABOUT OUR EXPERIENCES,  
THE SUCCESSFUL SESSIONS AND MISERABLE FAILS...

YES, THERE WERE FAILS. I MAY BE SKIPPING OVER THEM  
AT TIMES, BUT A SUDDEN NEED TO VISIT THE TOILET  
MID-SESSION WOULD HIT ME MORE OFTEN THAN I  
WOULD LIKE TO ADMIT...

BI-BLIP



AND WHILE I WAS BUSY BRAGGING  
LIKE A TEENAGER, ANNE WAS BECOMING  
INCREASINGLY NERVOUS.

AT THAT VERY MOMENT, IT WAS  
HITTING HER...

SHE REALLY *WAS* IN A HOUSE WITH A *DOMINATRIX*!

BUT THANKFULLY, ALLY WAS *OBSERVANT*.

I GUESS READING BODY LANGUAGE  
COMES WITH THE JOB DESCRIPTION  
FOR A DOMME.

HER METHOD OF DEFUSING THE SITUATION  
WASN'T THE ONE I MIGHT HAVE CHOSEN...

BUUUUUUT...



YOU  
WANNA SEE  
THE ROOM?

ANNE, YOU  
HAVE ABSOLUTELY  
*NOTHING* TO FEAR,  
OKAY?

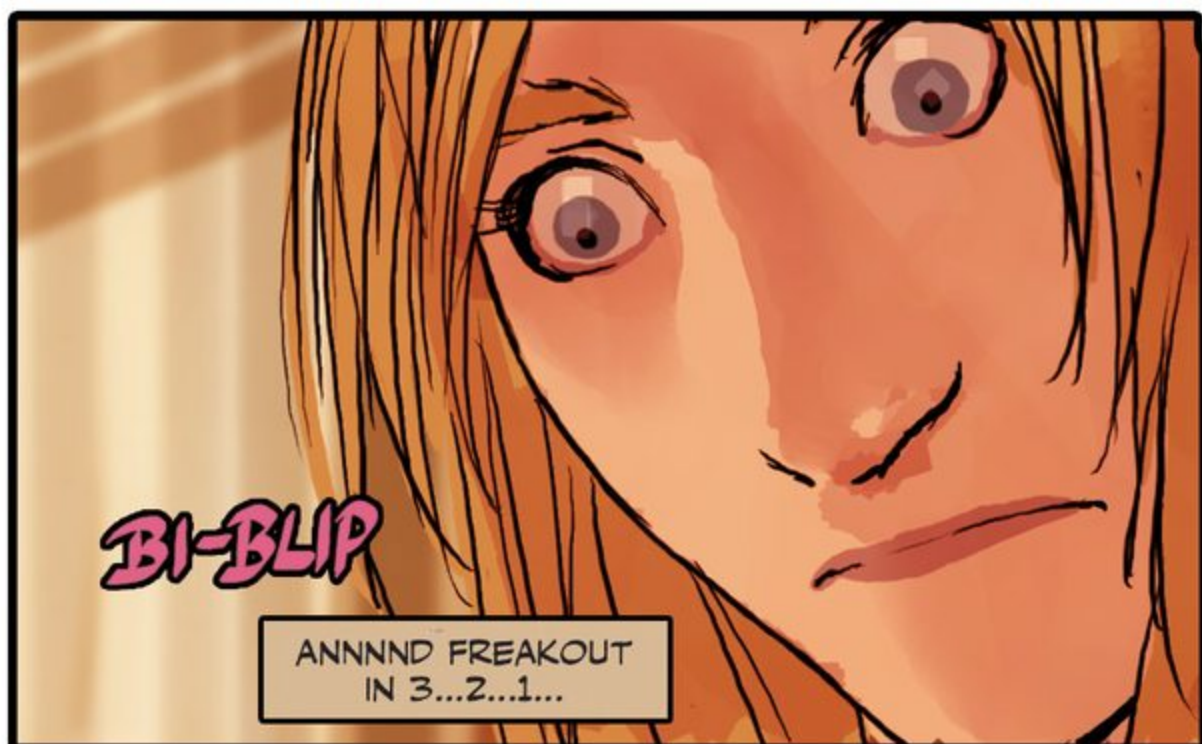
I PROMISE!

MAYBE IT WAS HER LOOK,  
OR HER DORKY SWEATER...  
HER SMILE, OR HER TONE  
OF VOICE...WHATEVER IT  
WAS, IT WORKED.

FREAKOUT WAS  
DIFFUSED!

BI-BLIP

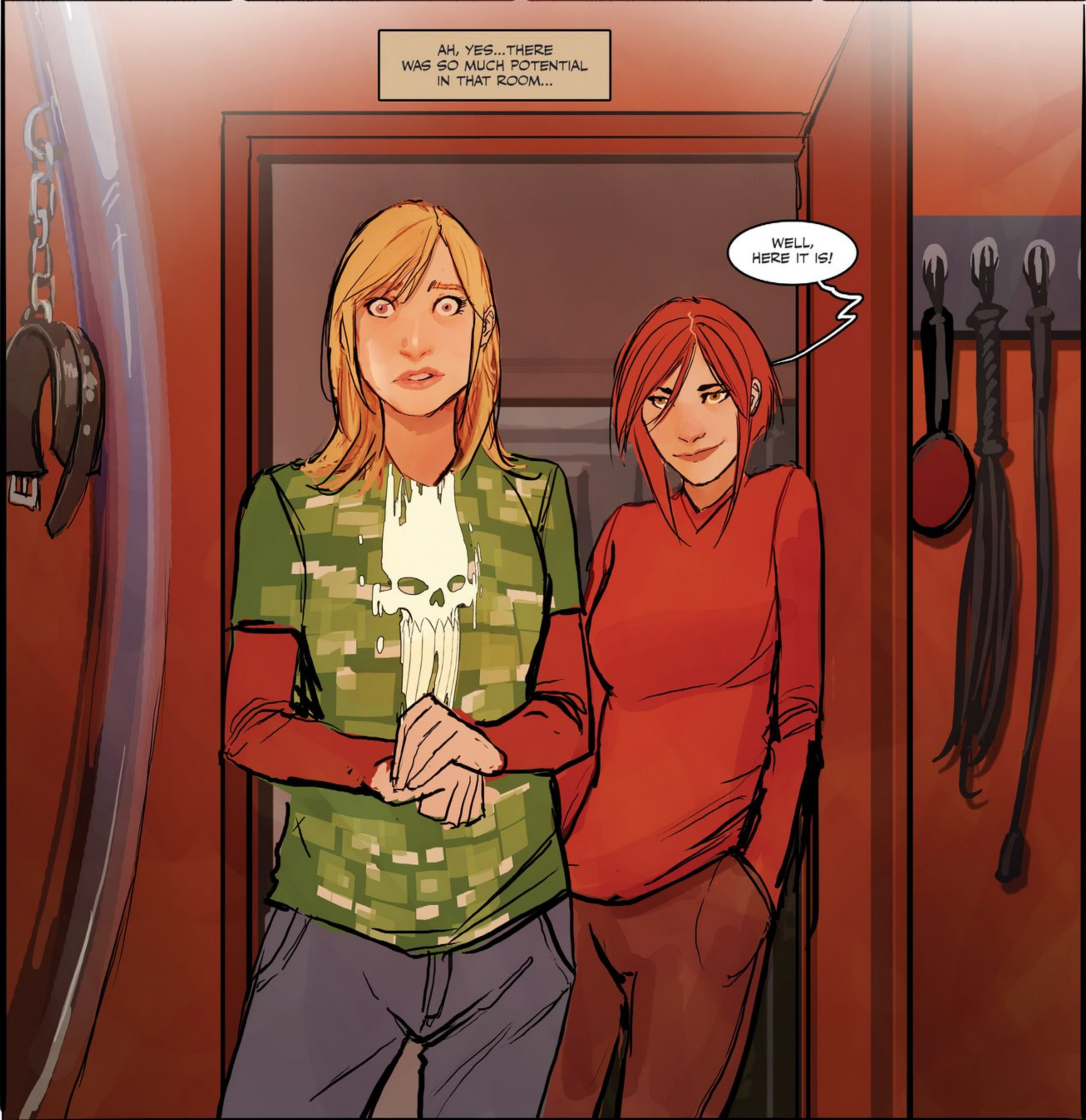
ANNNND FREAKOUT  
IN 3...2...1...







WELL...  
MOSTLY  
DIFFUSED.



AH, YES...THERE  
WAS SO MUCH POTENTIAL  
IN THAT ROOM...

WELL,  
HERE IT IS!



ANNE SAW THIS POTENTIAL...  
AND IT SCARED HER...

THERE WAS A SCENE IN MY STORY OF  
LIBBETH, ALLISON, AND SARAH.  
SARAH'S FIRST SESSION WITH THE OTHERS.

I WROTE THIS SPECIFIC BIT OF  
STORY FROM SARAH'S PERSPECTIVE.

I GUESS THAT WAS WHY ANNE RELATED SO  
STRONGLY TO IT. IN FACT, SHE OWED SEVERAL  
ORGASMS TO THAT SCENE ALONE.

THAT SATURDAY, AS SHE ENTERED OUR  
PLAYROOM, SHE SAW THE POTENTIAL,  
AND THOUGHT: *WHAT IF?*

SHE FEARED THE "WHAT IF."

SHE FEARED THE POSSIBILITY OF  
THIS SCENARIO ACTUALLY HAPPENING.  
FEARED HER OWN DESIRE FOR  
THIS TO OCCUR, AND ABOVE  
ALL, SHE FEARED HER REACTION  
TO A POSSIBLE OFFER...

IN SHORT, SHE WAS EXPERIENCING  
A COMPLETE AND UTTER SYSTEM FAILURE.

THANKFULLY, DOMINATRIX WALDO  
HERE HAD HER SPECIFIC AIR  
OF COMPLETE ALOOFNESS, WHICH  
REBOOTED ANNE'S BRAIN  
WITH EASE.

SO...EHM...YEAH...  
AS YOU CAN SEE, WE HAD  
A SPARE BED HERE AS WELL...BUUUUT  
I KINDA SORTA FIGURED YOU MIGHT  
GET FREAKED OUT IF I WENT...  
*"HEY, YOU'LL SLEEP IN  
MY SEX-ROOM!"*





YEAH...  
ON A SIDENOTE,  
THIS MAY BE THE  
COOLEST BED I'VE  
EVER SEEN.

WHY,  
THANK YOU!



AND THIS IS WHERE  
SHE HAD YOU BOUND, THINKING  
YOU WERE ALONE?

YUP!

DOESN'T  
SEEM ALL *THAT*  
IMPRESSIVE.

IT'S MISSING  
THE SYBIAN NOW.



HOLY CRAP, YOU  
WEREN'T KIDDING ABOUT THE  
UNIFORMS, WERE YOU? JEEZ,  
HOW MUCH DO YOU SPEND  
ON ALL THIS???

WE DO  
NOT SPEAK OF  
THAT!



TRUST ME, IT IS  
NOT EVEN COMPARABLE.  
IF THIS FELLA HADN'T SEEN  
SO MUCH ACTION, I WOULD  
EVEN LET YOU TRY IT!

ALLY, I HAVE  
A VIBRATOR.  
OF MY  
OWN!



COMPARED TO  
THIS...NO, YOU DON'T!

UMM..YEAH!  
I DO!



NUH-UH!

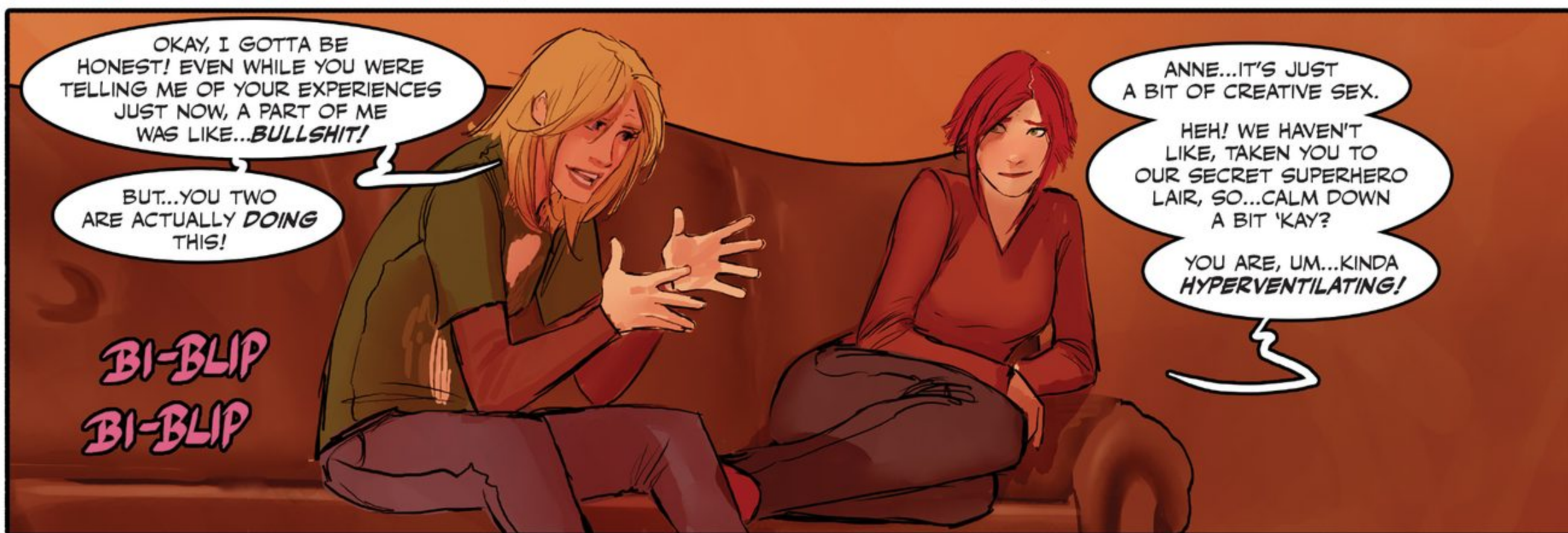
OH, YES!  
PREEETY  
SURE I DO!



YOU KNOW  
NOTHING, ANNE!

I BEG TO  
DIFFER!

THIS WENT ON FOR 15 OF  
THE MOST POINTLESS MINUTES OF  
MY LIFE...SO WE'LL JUST MOVE ON!



OKAY, I GOTTA BE  
HONEST! EVEN WHILE YOU WERE  
TELLING ME OF YOUR EXPERIENCES  
JUST NOW, A PART OF ME  
WAS LIKE...**BULLSHIT!**

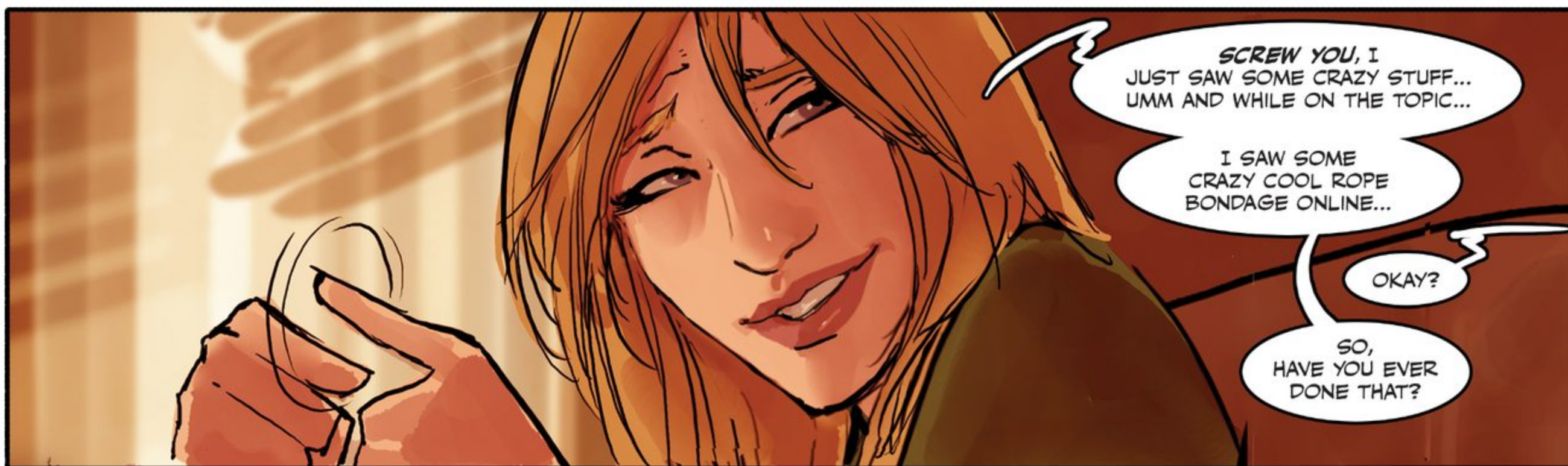
BUT...YOU TWO  
ARE ACTUALLY **DOING**  
THIS!

**BI-BLIP**  
**BI-BLIP**

ANNE...IT'S JUST  
A BIT OF CREATIVE SEX.

HEH! WE HAVEN'T  
LIKE, TAKEN YOU TO  
OUR SECRET SUPERHERO  
LAIR, SO...CALM DOWN  
A BIT 'KAY?

YOU ARE, UH...KINDA  
**HYPERVENTILATING!**



**SCREW YOU,** I  
JUST SAW SOME CRAZY STUFF...  
UMM AND WHILE ON THE TOPIC...

I SAW SOME  
CRAZY COOL ROPE  
BONDAGE ONLINE...

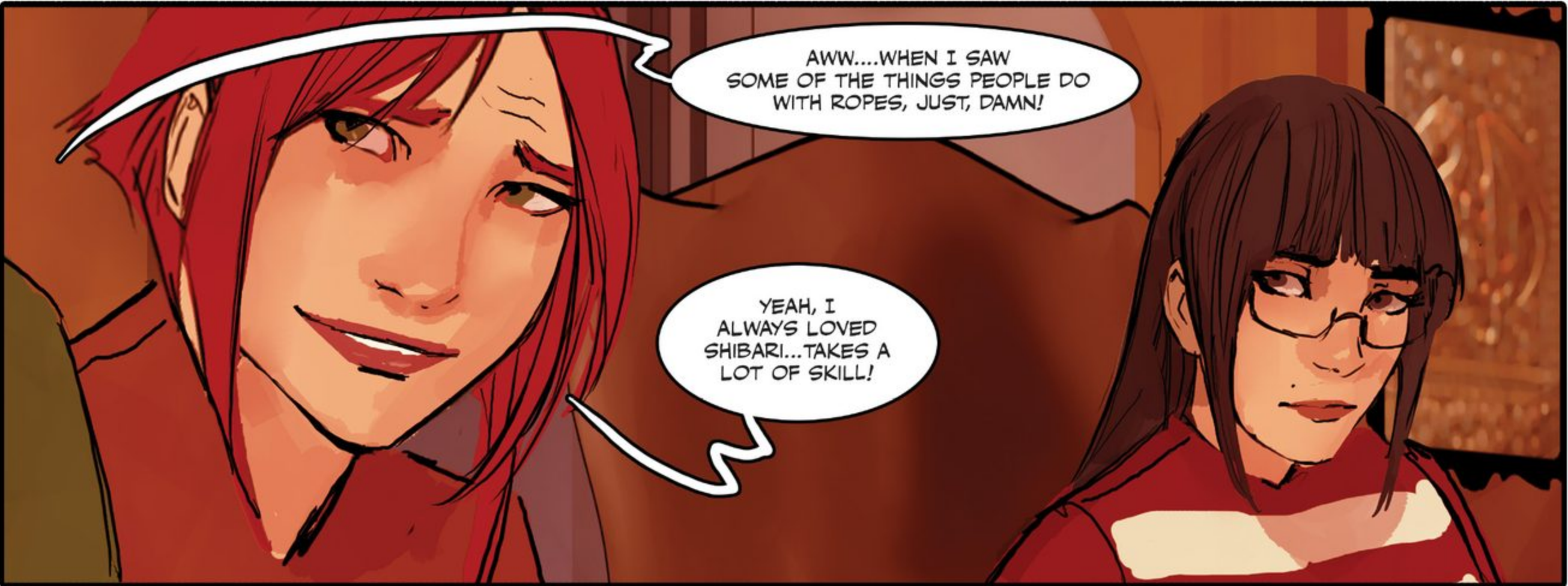
OKAY?

SO,  
HAVE YOU EVER  
DONE THAT?



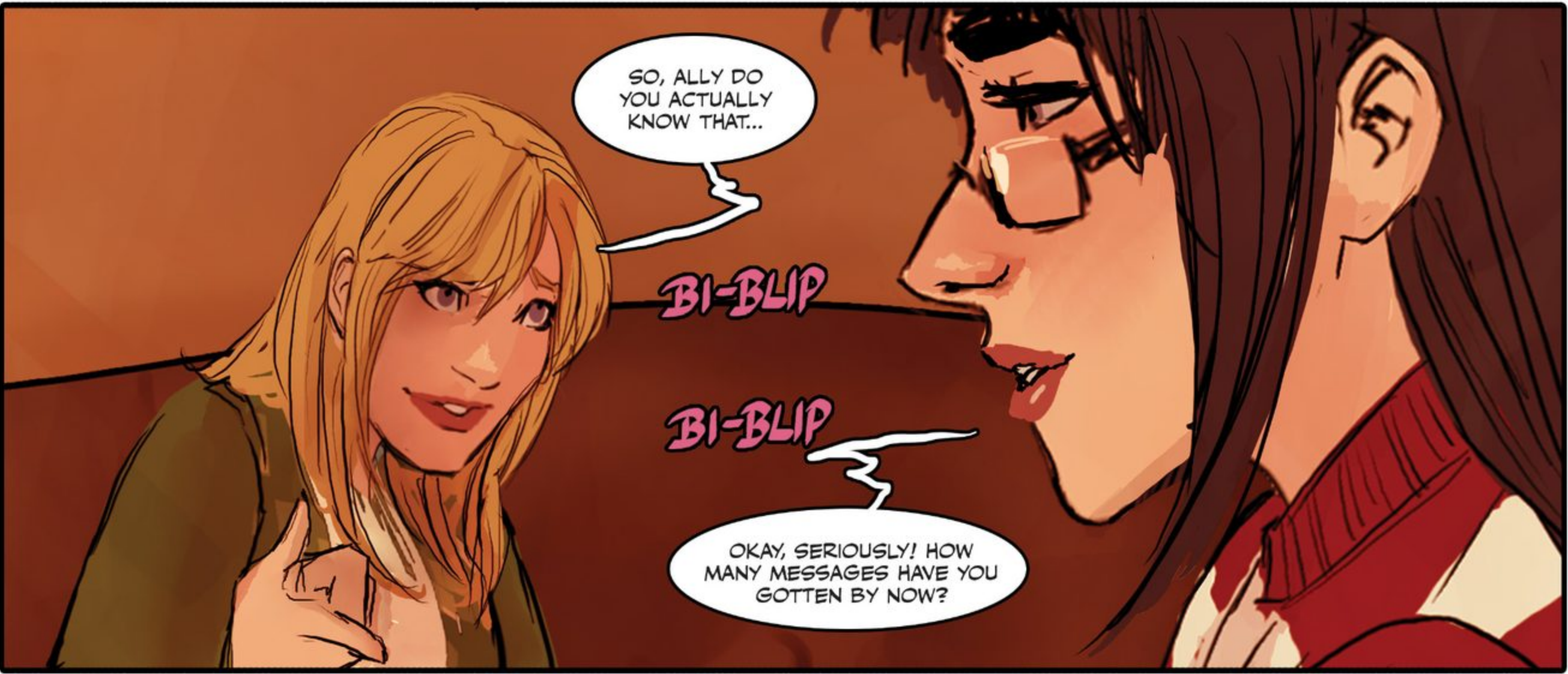


UM...WELL...  
NOT REALLY. I MEAN, WE USE  
ROPES AT TIMES, BUT NOT TO  
THAT EXTENT, WE MOSTLY STICK  
TO OTHER KINDS OF  
RESTRAINTS.



AWW....WHEN I SAW  
SOME OF THE THINGS PEOPLE DO  
WITH ROPES, JUST, DAMN!

YEAH, I  
ALWAYS LOVED  
SHIBARI...TAKES A  
LOT OF SKILL!



SO, ALLY DO  
YOU ACTUALLY  
KNOW THAT...

BI-BLIP

BI-BLIP

OKAY, SERIOUSLY! HOW  
MANY MESSAGES HAVE YOU  
GOTTEN BY NOW?



WAIT, LEMME  
CHECK!  
WHOA!

THAAAT'S A  
LOT OF PEOPLE  
CALLING MY  
BULLSHIT!



ANNND CALLING  
ME AN ATTENTION  
SEEKING...WOW...  
THAT'S UNCALLED-  
FOR!

"LYING TO GET  
ATTENTION..."

TAKE A  
FUCKING JOKE,  
ASSHOLE!



SO, THEY WANT  
PROOF?





AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA...  
OH, GOD...HOW CRAZY IS IT THAT  
CASSIE IS THE LOUDEST AND MOST FOUL-  
MOUTHED OF THE REMAINING  
FEW TROLLS?

YOU THINK  
SHE'LL REALLY MAKE A  
T-SHIRT OF US?

NAH!

BI-BLIP  
BI-BLIP  
BI-BLIP  
BI-BLIP

YEAH, THAT WAS A WEIRD DAY.  
FUN, BUT WEIRD.

I'LL CALL YOU BOTH  
TOMORROW, MAYBE IF YOU WANT  
WE CAN GRAB LUNCH OR  
SOMETHING?

SURE!

I'LL BE BACK IN AN  
HOUR OR SO. GONNA KEEP HER  
COMPANY 'TIL SHE GETS TO HER  
CAR, AND I'VE GOT SOMETHING  
I NEED TO PICK UP.

OH...OKAY...  
I'LL SEE MAYBE ABOUT GETTING  
SOME WRITING DONE, THEN.

AND I REALLY PLANNED  
ON DOING *JUST* THAT.









BDSM WAS BIG IN MY LIFE.  
"NOOO, REALLY???" YEAH! I KNOW.  
POINT IS, FOR ME IT WAS PRETTY  
MUCH JUST A SECRET FETISH.

FOR ALLY, IT WAS  
MEASURABLY BIGGER.

I COULDN'T FOR THE  
LIFE OF ME TELL YOU  
WHAT TRIGGERED MY  
FETISHISM...

AT BEST, I REMEMBER  
AT SOME TIME BEING BORED  
AND TAKING A HAIRBAND  
AND KINDA TYING MY OWN  
HANDS BEHIND MY BACK...

HEY, I *SAID* I WAS *BORED*!

AND THEN I STRUGGLED  
AGAINST IT AND...KINDA  
LIKED IT, I GUESS.

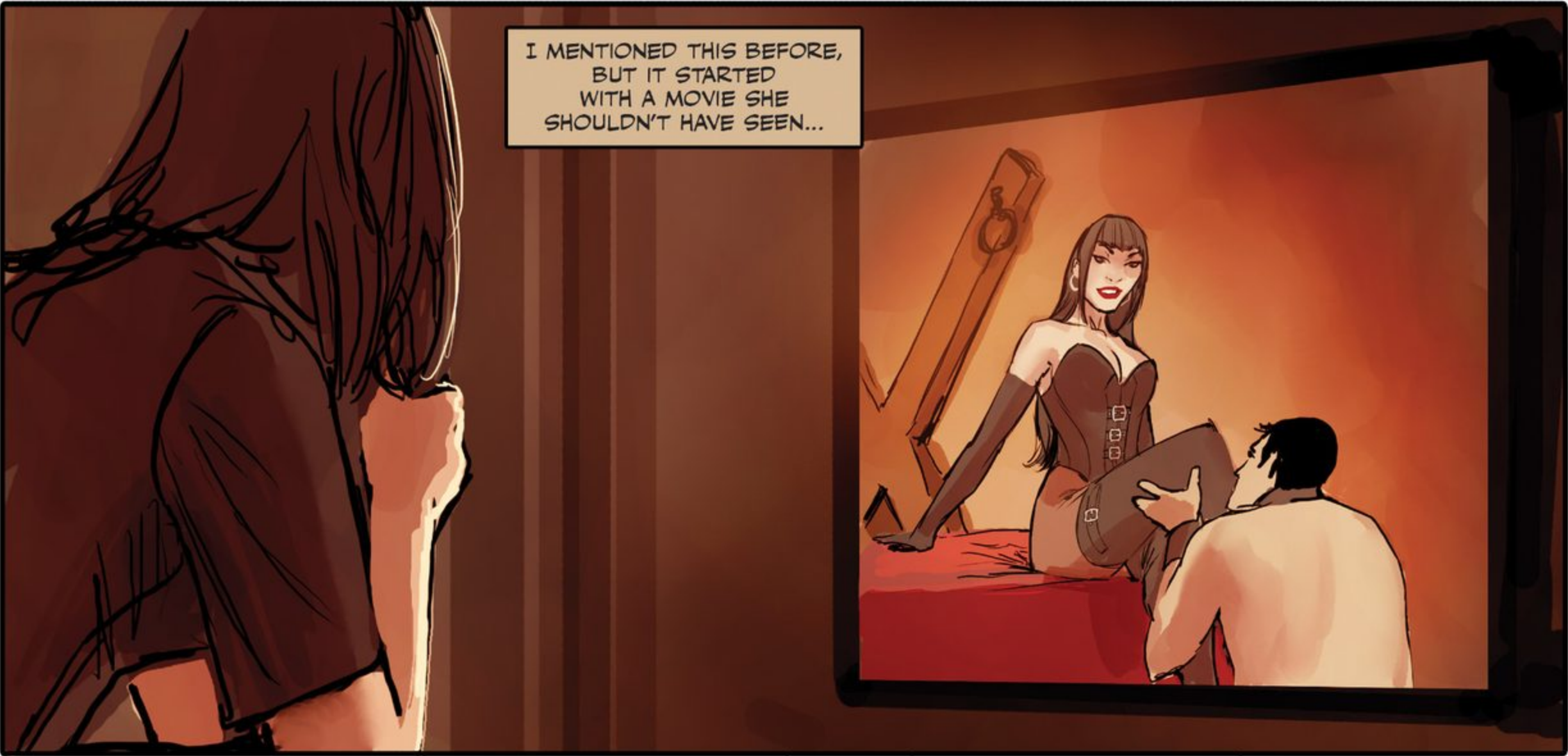


I DON'T KNOW...

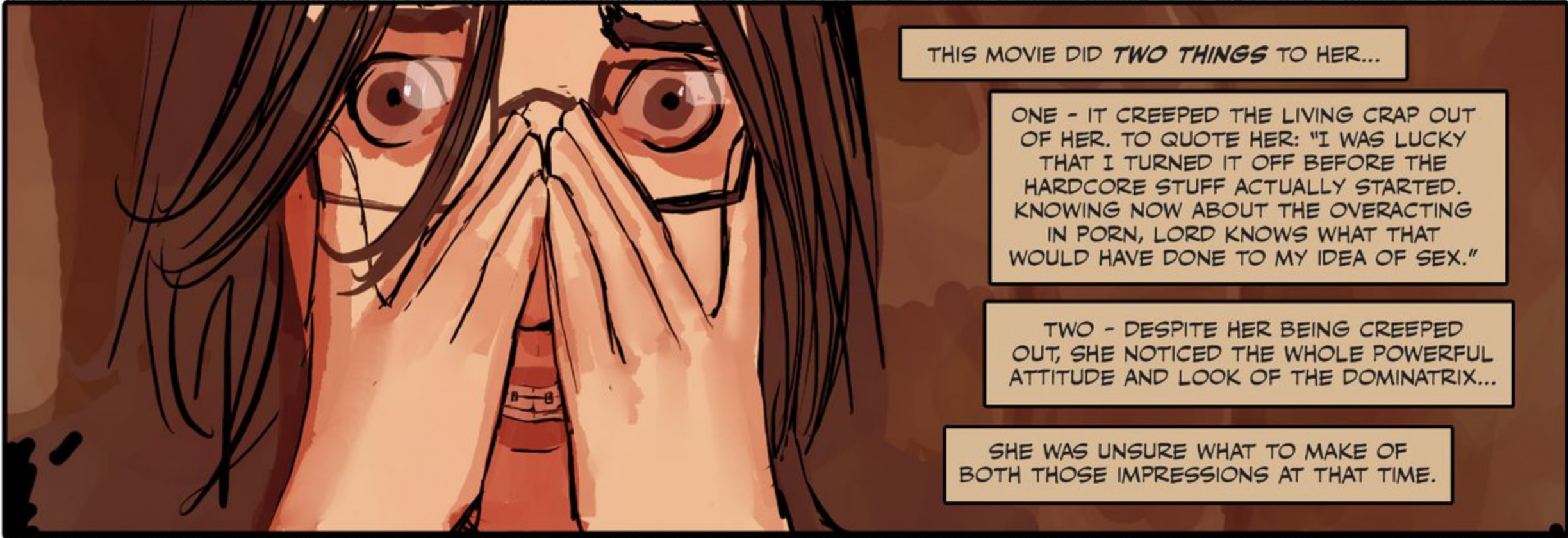
FOR ME, IT WAS SUBTLE  
ENOUGH NOT TO EVEN NOTICE IT,  
UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE AND I  
WAS EYES-DEEP IN MY LITTLE  
FETISH.

ALLY, HOWEVER...

IN A WAY, HER JOURNEY HELPED  
HER BECOME THE PERSON SHE IS  
TODAY. IT DEFINED HER  
FRIENDSHIPS, IT WAS THE BEST  
AND THE WORST SHE REMEMBERED.



I MENTIONED THIS BEFORE,  
BUT IT STARTED  
WITH A MOVIE SHE  
SHOULDN'T HAVE SEEN...



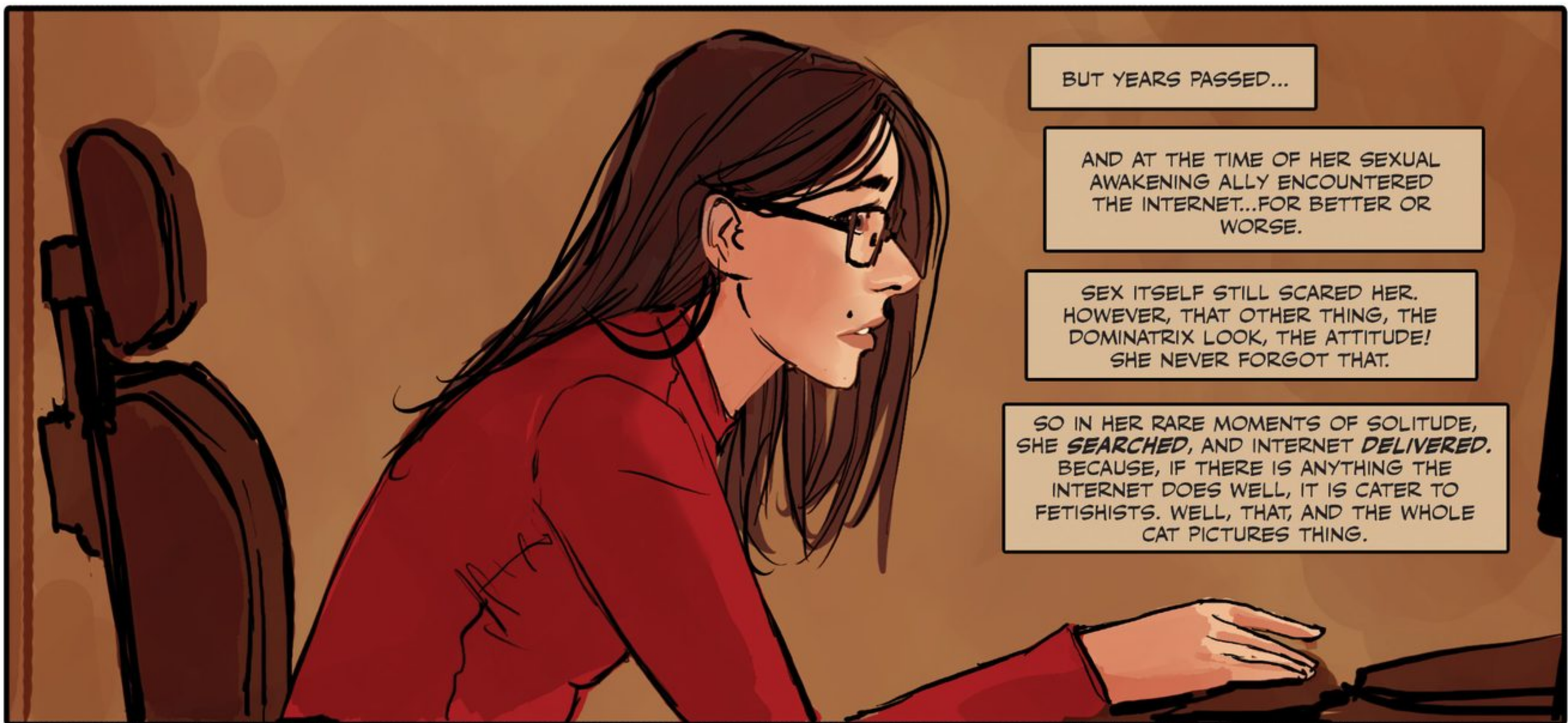
THIS MOVIE DID *TWO THINGS* TO HER...

ONE - IT CREEPED THE LIVING CRAP OUT  
OF HER. TO QUOTE HER: "I WAS LUCKY  
THAT I TURNED IT OFF BEFORE THE  
HARDCORE STUFF ACTUALLY STARTED.  
KNOWING NOW ABOUT THE OVERACTING  
IN PORN, LORD KNOWS WHAT THAT  
WOULD HAVE DONE TO MY IDEA OF SEX."

TWO - DESPITE HER BEING CREEPED  
OUT, SHE NOTICED THE WHOLE POWERFUL  
ATTITUDE AND LOOK OF THE DOMINATRIX...

SHE WAS UNSURE WHAT TO MAKE OF  
BOTH THOSE IMPRESSIONS AT THAT TIME.





BUT YEARS PASSED...

AND AT THE TIME OF HER SEXUAL AWAKENING ALLY ENCOUNTERED THE INTERNET...FOR BETTER OR WORSE.

SEX ITSELF STILL SCARED HER. HOWEVER, THAT OTHER THING, THE DOMINATRIX LOOK, THE ATTITUDE! SHE NEVER FORGOT THAT.

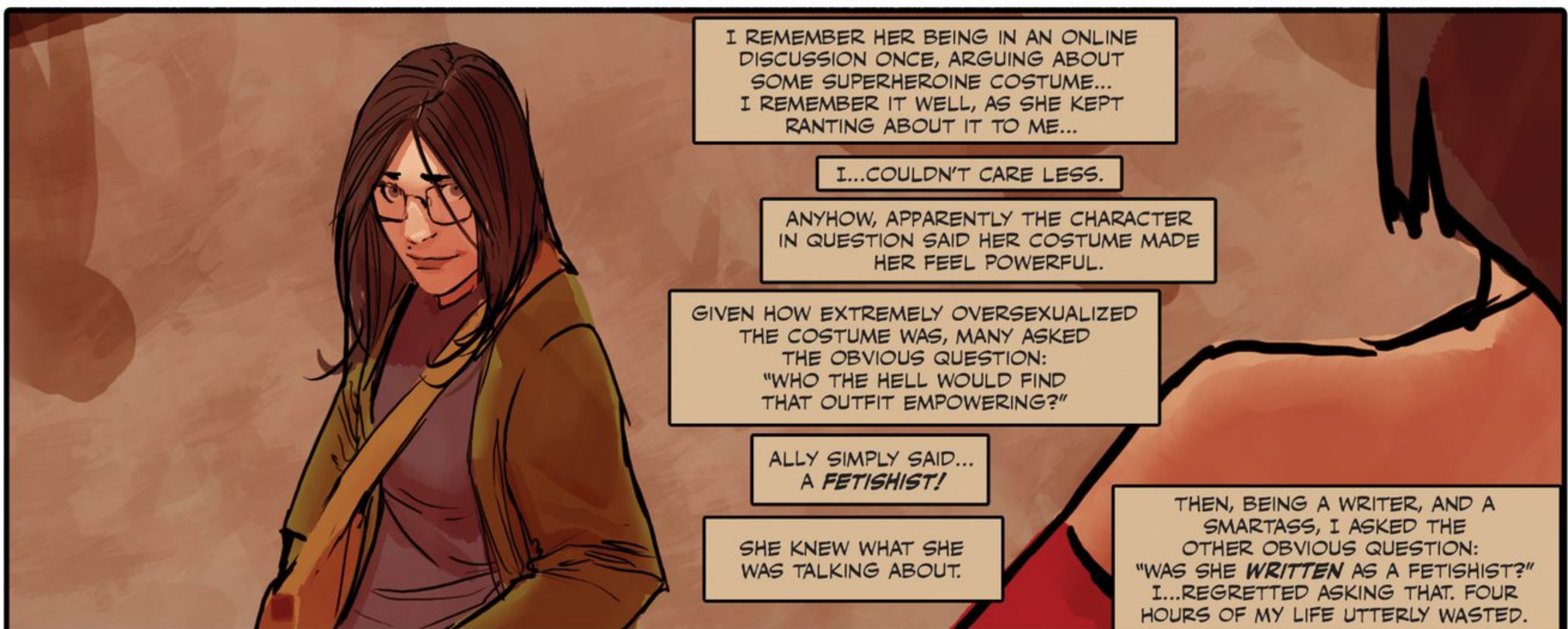
SO IN HER RARE MOMENTS OF SOLITUDE, SHE **SEARCHED**, AND INTERNET **DELIVERED**. BECAUSE, IF THERE IS ANYTHING THE INTERNET DOES WELL, IT IS CATER TO FETISHISTS. WELL, THAT, AND THE WHOLE CAT PICTURES THING.



WITH HER TASTES DEVELOPING, SHE SPENT QUITE A BIT OF HER HIGH SCHOOL AGE THINKING...IMAGINING...

CONSIDERING THE IDEA OF HERSELF FEELING POWERFUL...

CONFIDENT.



I REMEMBER HER BEING IN AN ONLINE DISCUSSION ONCE, ARGUING ABOUT SOME SUPERHEROINE COSTUME... I REMEMBER IT WELL, AS SHE KEPT RANTING ABOUT IT TO ME...

I...COULDN'T CARE LESS.

ANYHOW, APPARENTLY THE CHARACTER IN QUESTION SAID HER COSTUME MADE HER FEEL POWERFUL.

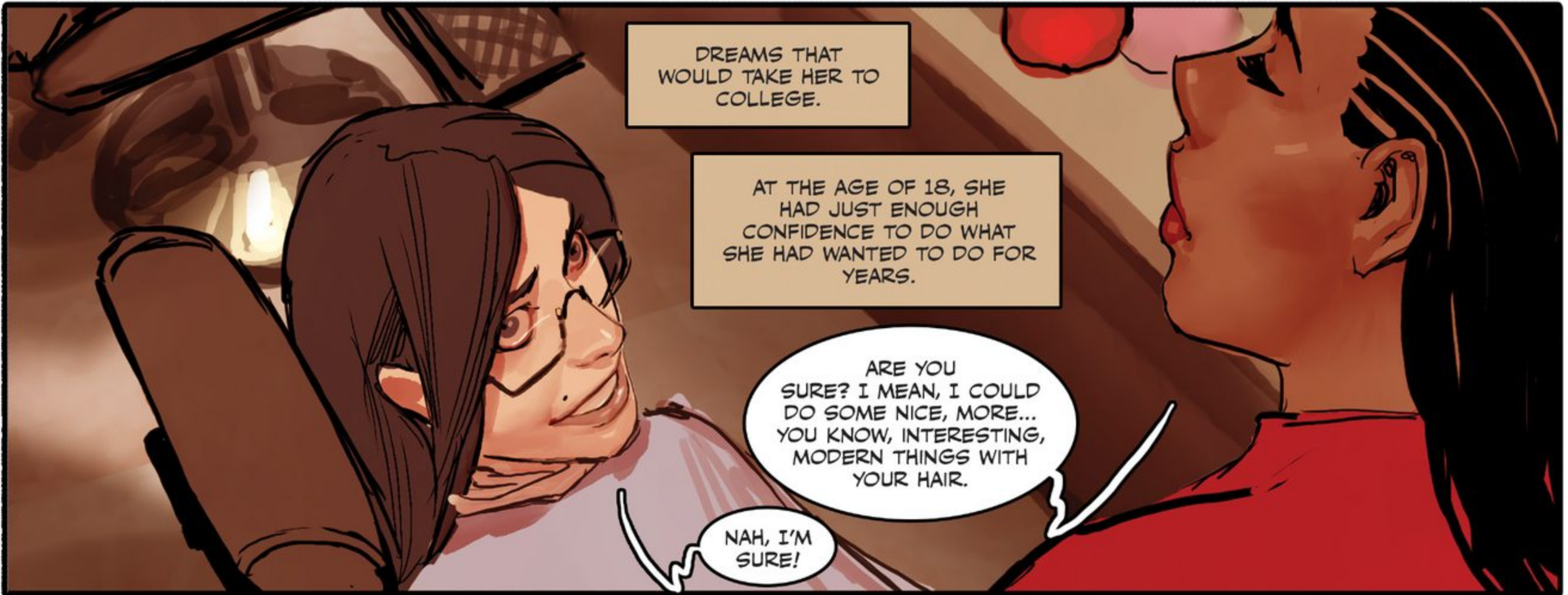
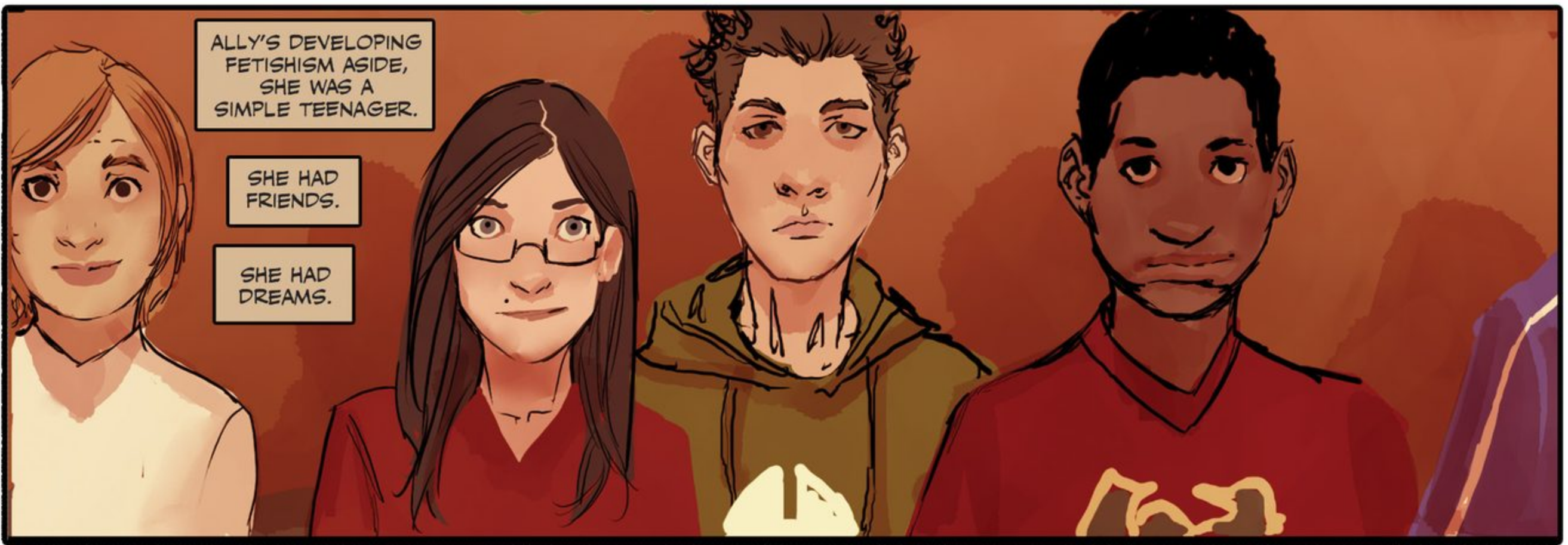
GIVEN HOW EXTREMELY OVERSEXUALIZED THE COSTUME WAS, MANY ASKED THE OBVIOUS QUESTION: "WHO THE HELL WOULD FIND THAT OUTFIT EMPOWERING?"

ALLY SIMPLY SAID... A **FETISHIST!**

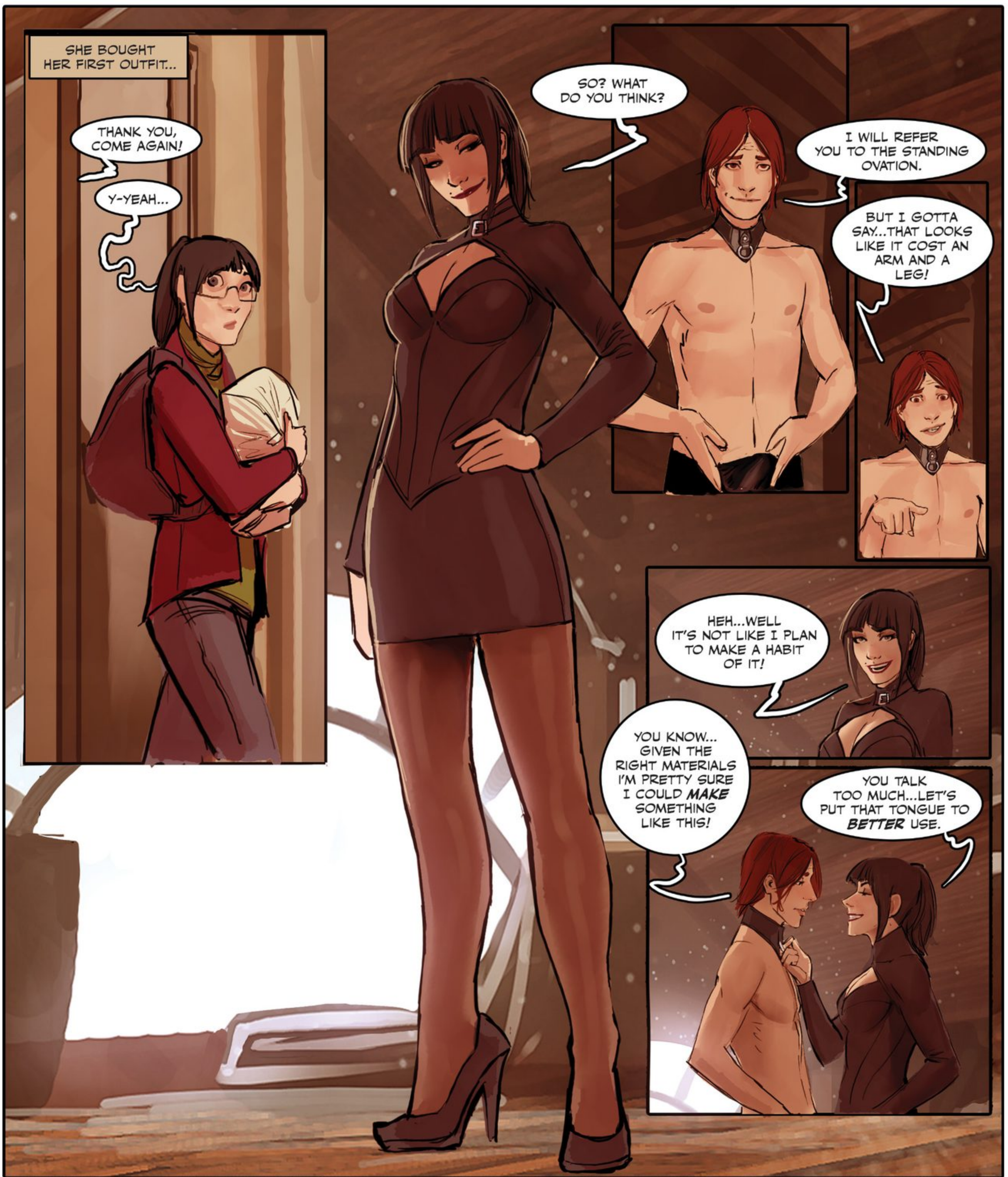
SHE KNEW WHAT SHE WAS TALKING ABOUT.

THEN, BEING A WRITER, AND A SMARTASS, I ASKED THE OTHER OBVIOUS QUESTION: "WAS SHE **WRITTEN** AS A FETISHIST?" I...REGRETTED ASKING THAT. FOUR HOURS OF MY LIFE UTTERLY WASTED.









SHE BOUGHT  
HER FIRST OUTFIT...

THANK YOU,  
COME AGAIN!

Y-YEAH...

SO? WHAT  
DO YOU THINK?

I WILL REFER  
YOU TO THE STANDING  
OVATION.

BUT I GOTTA  
SAY...THAT LOOKS  
LIKE IT COST AN  
ARM AND A  
LEG!

HEH...WELL  
IT'S NOT LIKE I PLAN  
TO MAKE A HABIT  
OF IT!

YOU KNOW...  
GIVEN THE  
RIGHT MATERIALS  
I'M PRETTY SURE  
I COULD **MAKE**  
SOMETHING  
LIKE THIS!

YOU TALK  
TOO MUCH...LET'S  
PUT THAT TONGUE TO  
**BETTER** USE.

YUP...I MAY HAVE BEEN ALLY'S FIRST  
REAL SUB, BUT A LOT OF FIRST  
THINGS SHE TRIED WITH ALAN...

WHICH BRINGS ME TO  
THE REASON FOR THIS  
WHOLE SEGUE...

IT WAS WITH ALAN THAT  
ALLY FIRST EXPERIMENTED WITH  
ROPE BONDAGE.



SHE DID IT  
ON HERSELF.

SHE WAS BOUND  
BY ALAN...

AND SHE DID  
THE BINDING.

POINT IS, ROPES  
WERE  
A MEANS TO AN END...SHE  
JUST LIKED THEM.

BUT THERE CAME A  
TIME WHEN SHE *LOVED*  
THE ROPES.

I'VE PERSONALLY ATTENDED ONE COMIC BOOK  
CONVENTION (*ALLY WAS HUNTING DOWN SOME  
SKETCHES*) AND THREE FETISH CONVENTIONS...  
ALLY ONCE TOLD ME THEY WERE STRANGELY  
SIMILAR IN NATURE, AND, WELL, I COULD SEE IT.

SHE FOUND THAT LOVE THREE YEARS  
BEFORE MEETING ME. BACK THEN, SHE  
RECONNECTED WITH ALAN AND DECIDED  
TO HELP OUT WITH HIS BOOTH DURING  
A FETISH CONVENTION.

AT BOTH OF THESE KINDS OF  
CONVENTIONS, YOU HAVE A BUNCH  
OF NERDS HAVING FUN AND  
SATISFYING THEIR OWN NERDINESS...

ALAN, I WOULD  
LIKE YOU TO MEET  
HARPER -- I TOLD YOU  
ABOUT HIM...

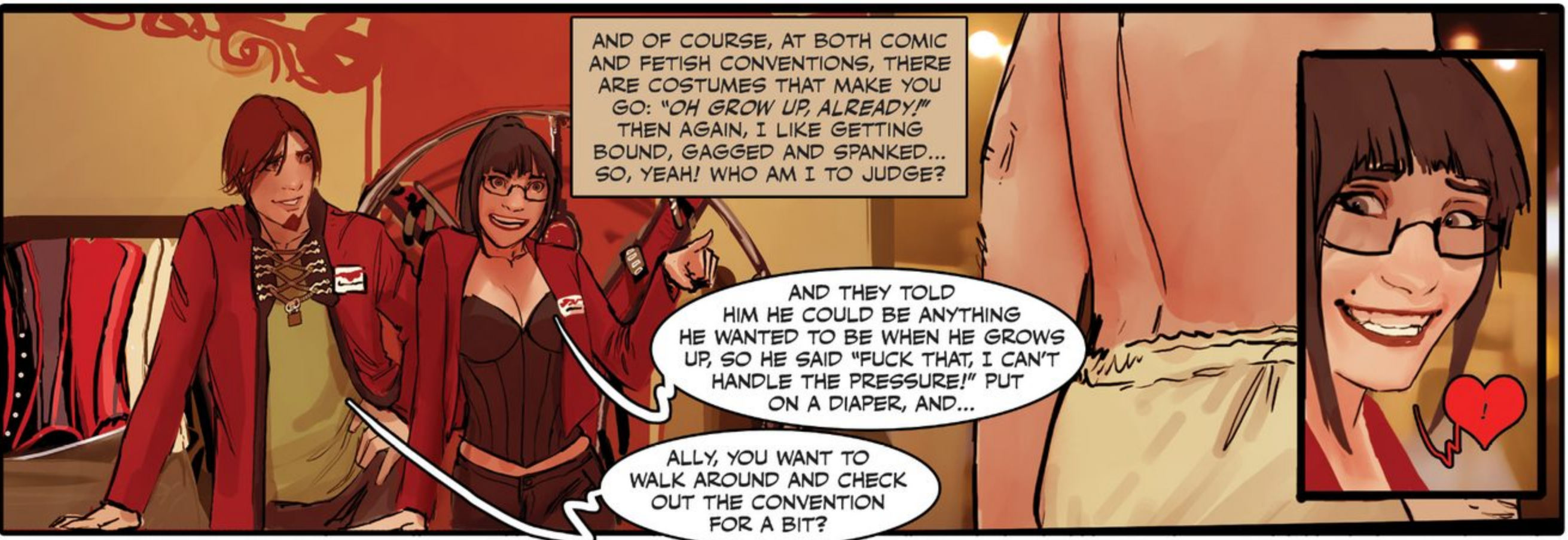
OH, YOU ARE  
THE GUY WHO IS OPENING  
THE CLUB?

YEAH, *THE  
CRIMSON!*

MANY PEOPLE WEARING COSTUMES...  
SOME SEXY, SOME IMPRESSIVE,  
SOME DOWNRIGHT ODD...

HEY ALAN,  
CHECK THIS GUY...  
HIS PARENTS TOLD  
HIM HE COULD BE  
*ANYTHING* HE  
WANTED IN LIFE --  
SO HE BECAME  
A HORSE!

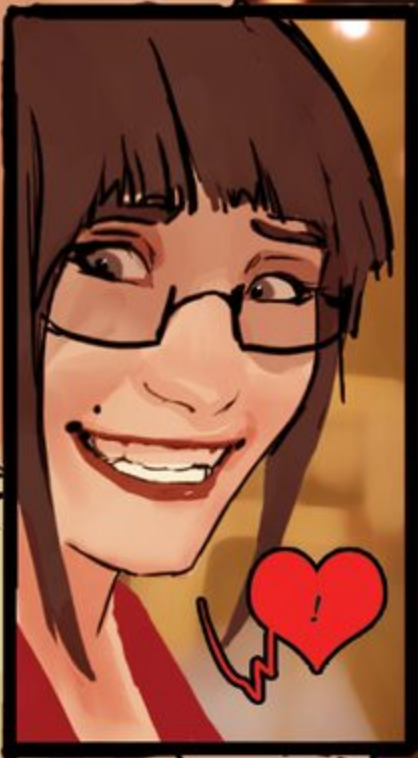




AND OF COURSE, AT BOTH COMIC AND FETISH CONVENTIONS, THERE ARE COSTUMES THAT MAKE YOU GO: "OH GROW UP, ALREADY!" THEN AGAIN, I LIKE GETTING BOUND, GAGGED AND SPANKED... SO, YEAH! WHO AM I TO JUDGE?

AND THEY TOLD HIM HE COULD BE ANYTHING HE WANTED TO BE WHEN HE GROWS UP, SO HE SAID "FUCK THAT, I CAN'T HANDLE THE PRESSURE!" PUT ON A DIAPER, AND...

ALLY, YOU WANT TO WALK AROUND AND CHECK OUT THE CONVENTION FOR A BIT?



IF THERE IS ONE THING I LIKED ABOUT THESE CONVENTIONS, IT WAS THE CASUAL JOKING...IT WAS WEIRD, YOU KNOW...

WE ARE ALL ODD IN OUR OWN WAYS, AND IN THESE PLACES YOU ENCOUNTER THE ODDNESS OF OTHERS FACE-TO-FACE.

I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU HAVE THESE IN DIFFERENT SIZES?

NOT HERE, THESE ARE JUST OUR TOP SELLER SIZES.

SO, WHERE DID YOU HIDE THE LIGHT SWITCH?

THIS IS THE WEIRDEST THING I HAVE EVER DONE... AND THAT'S SAYING SOMETHING.

WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO KNOW?

HEH, YOU SHOULD TRY IT FROM MY PERSPECTIVE!



BUT WE DO MANUFACTURE THEM ON DEMAND, IF YOU WANT WE CAN TAKE SOME MEASUREMENTS AND...

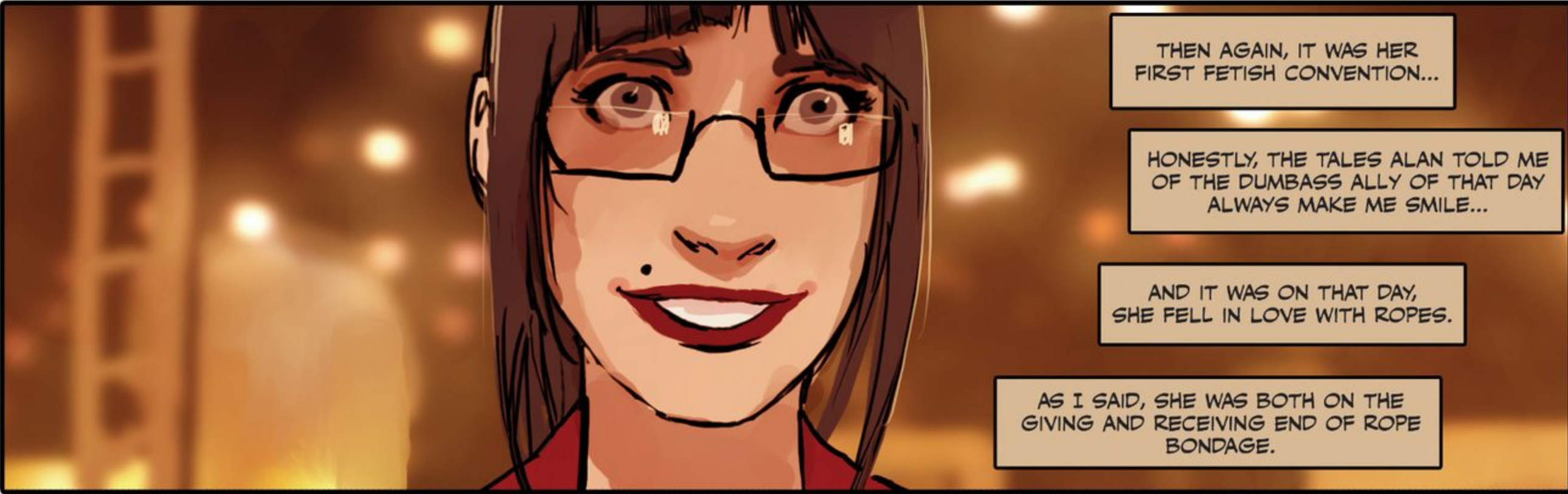
THESE PLACES WERE KIND OF A CELEBRATION OF ODDITY...



THEIR PARENTS TOLD THEM THEY COULD BE ANYTHING THEY WANTED SO...

SO...YOU KNOW...IT SAYS SOMETHING WHEN YOU ARE THE WEIRD ONE THERE...ALLY MAY HAVE HAD A BIT OF A DUMBASS MELTDOWN THAT DAY.





THEN AGAIN, IT WAS HER FIRST FETISH CONVENTION...

HONESTLY, THE TALES ALAN TOLD ME OF THE DUMBASS ALLY OF THAT DAY ALWAYS MAKE ME SMILE...

AND IT WAS ON THAT DAY, SHE FELL IN LOVE WITH ROPES.

AS I SAID, SHE WAS BOTH ON THE GIVING AND RECEIVING END OF ROPE BONDAGE.



BUT THEN AND THERE SHE HAD SEEN IT DONE IN A WAY THAT MESMERIZED HER.

HANG ON!  
NOT MUCH LONGER!

HANG ON?  
YOU KNOW, IF I HAD A PENNY FOR EVERY TIME I HEARD THAT DURING A PRESENTATION...



VAL, STRIKE A POSE!

WILL A FLAMINGO POSE DO...CAUSE...YOU KNOW IT'S THE ONLY ONE I CAN DO RIGHT NOW!



WOW, DUDE!  
YOU ARE PRODUCTIVE!

HEH! STILL NOT PRODUCTIVE ENOUGH TO MAKE A PROPER CATALOGUE, BUT SOME DAY...

ALLY SPENT OVER AN HOUR JUST BROWSING THE ROPE BONDAGE BOOKS THAT DAY...



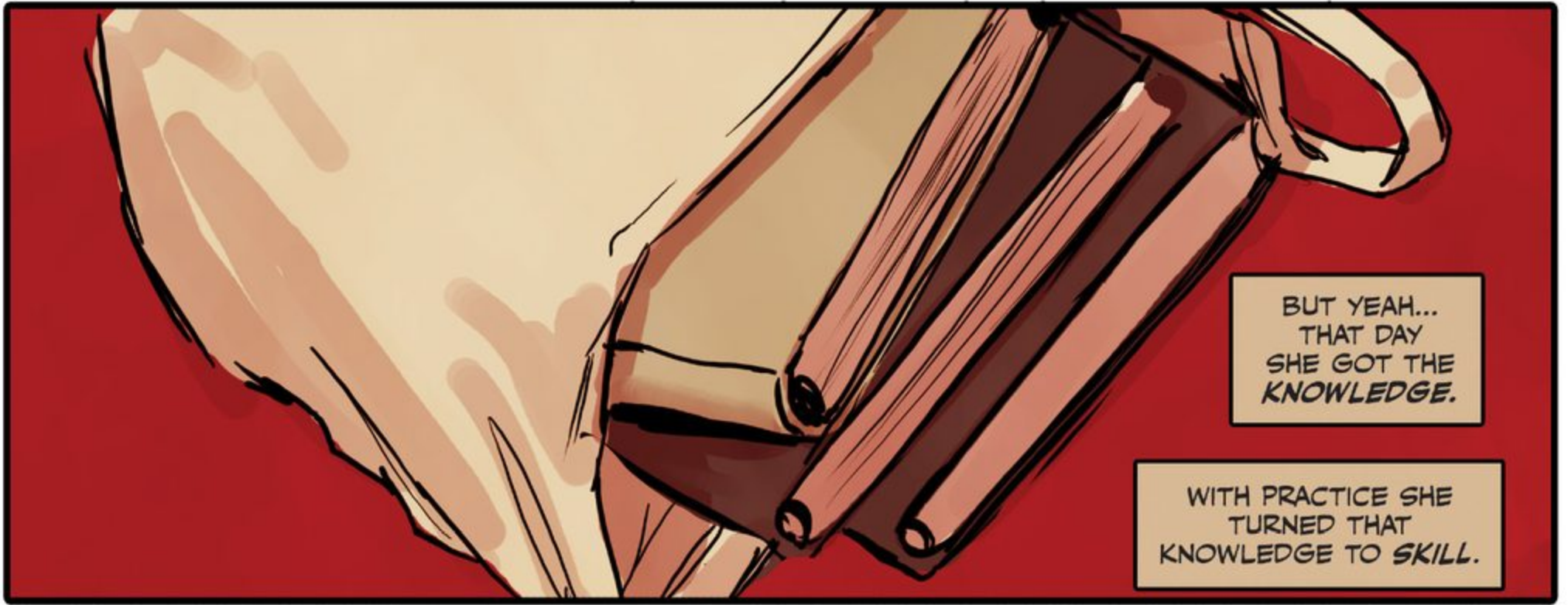


OH, YEAH! THIS REMINDS ME! REMEMBER HOW HARPER THOUGHT ALLY WAS A NATURAL WITH ROPES?

WELL, TURNS OUT THE TWO OF THEM DON'T REMEMBER EVER MEETING AT THAT CONVENTION...

HE DID REMEMBER THAT THERE WAS SOME GIRL SPOUTING THE SAME "PARENTS TOLD THEM" JOKE OVER AND OVER AGAIN...

HEY ALAN, CAN I LEAVE THESE HERE? I WANNA GO BROWSE A FEW MORE STANDS!



BUT YEAH... THAT DAY SHE GOT THE KNOWLEDGE.

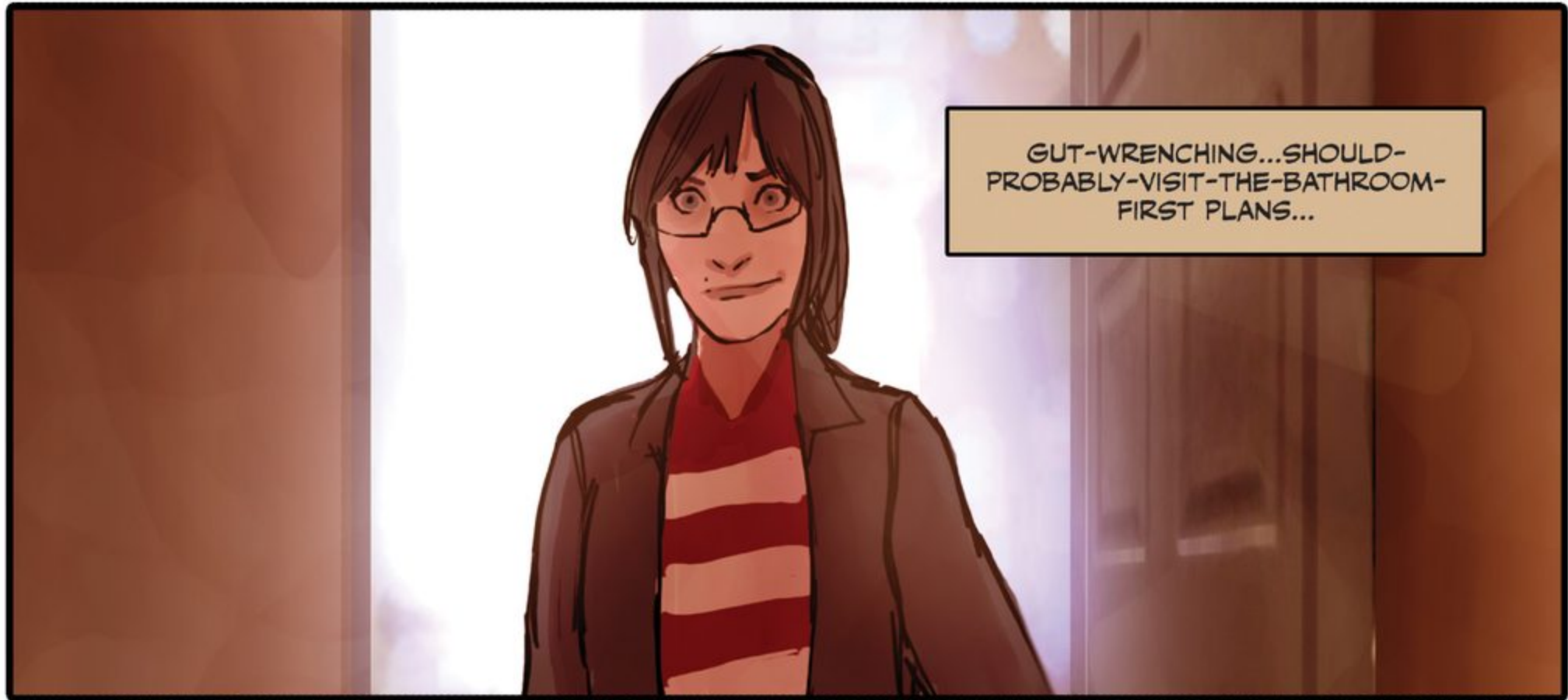
WITH PRACTICE SHE TURNED THAT KNOWLEDGE TO *SKILL*.



AND THAT SATURDAY, SHE HAD PLANS TO MAKE *GOOD* USE OF BOTH HER KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL.



*BIG PLANS...*



GUT-WRENCHING...SHOULD-PROBABLY-VISIT-THE-BATHROOM-FIRST PLANS...





FUNFACT! WHEN I'M EITHER EXCITED OR NERVOUS, I BITE MY LIP.

ALLY'S ROOM!

ALLY? SHE...

FLUSSSH

YEAH.



UGH, WUSSY-ASS STOMACH!

AND SHE WAS CRAZY NERVOUS...

THIS WAS A BIG MOMENT FOR HER.

SHE KNEW I LIKED ROPE BONDAGE.

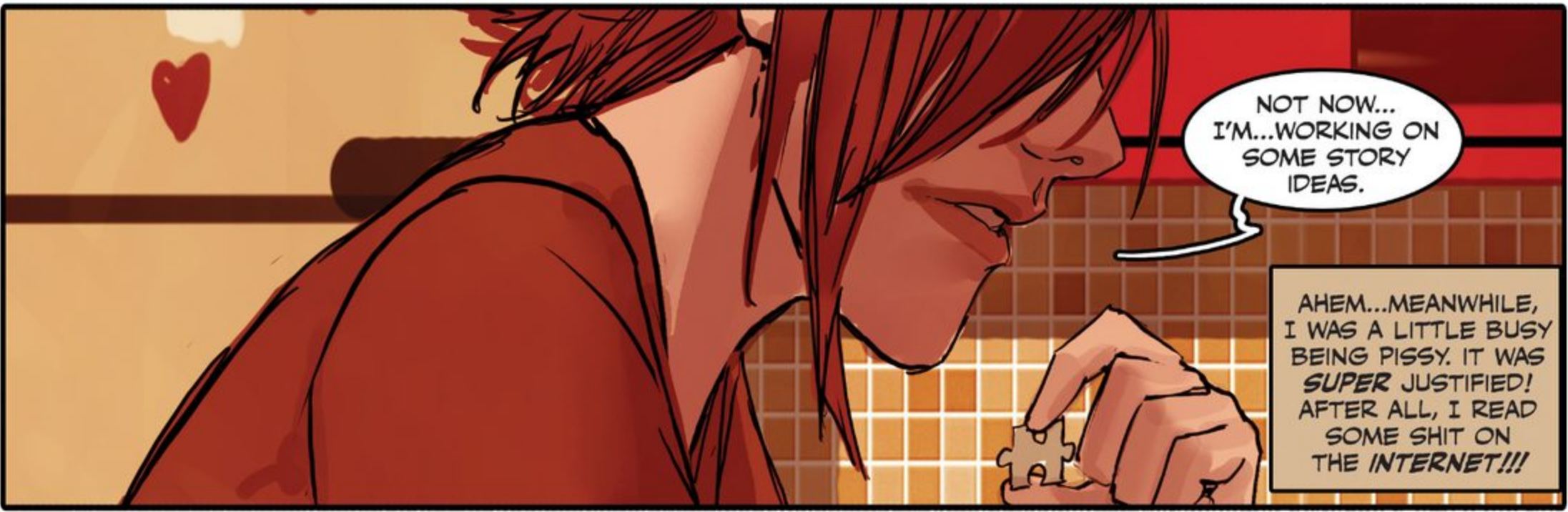


SHE WANTED TO DO THIS FOR ME.

HEY, LISA! I'M BACK!

HEY...

SO, UMMM, I HAD AN IDEA...



NOT NOW... I'M...WORKING ON SOME STORY IDEAS.

AHEM...MEANWHILE, I WAS A LITTLE BUSY BEING PISSY. IT WAS *SUPER* JUSTIFIED! AFTER ALL, I READ SOME SHIT ON THE *INTERNET*!!!



OH...UM... NEED SOME COMPANY?



NAH...



OOKAAY...



I GUESS... I'LL BE IN MY ROOM IF YOU NEED ME.

'KAY...



BUT OF COURSE, I CAME TO MY SENSES. I REALIZED THAT MY RESENTMENT FOR PEOPLE'S REACTIONS TO ALLY AND ANNE'S PHOTO WAS COMPLETELY MISPLACED AND UNJUSTIFIED.

AND SO I PROMPTLY WENT TO TALK TO ALLY...



...THE NEXT DAY...



YOU PLAYING?

NO.

WORKING?

UH-HUH...

YOU... ANGRY?

NAH... FOCUSED.



RIGHT...

SO...I GUESS YOU DON'T NEED ME DISTRACTING YOU...



MISTRESS?



YOU WANT ME TO GET READY IN THE PLAYROOM?

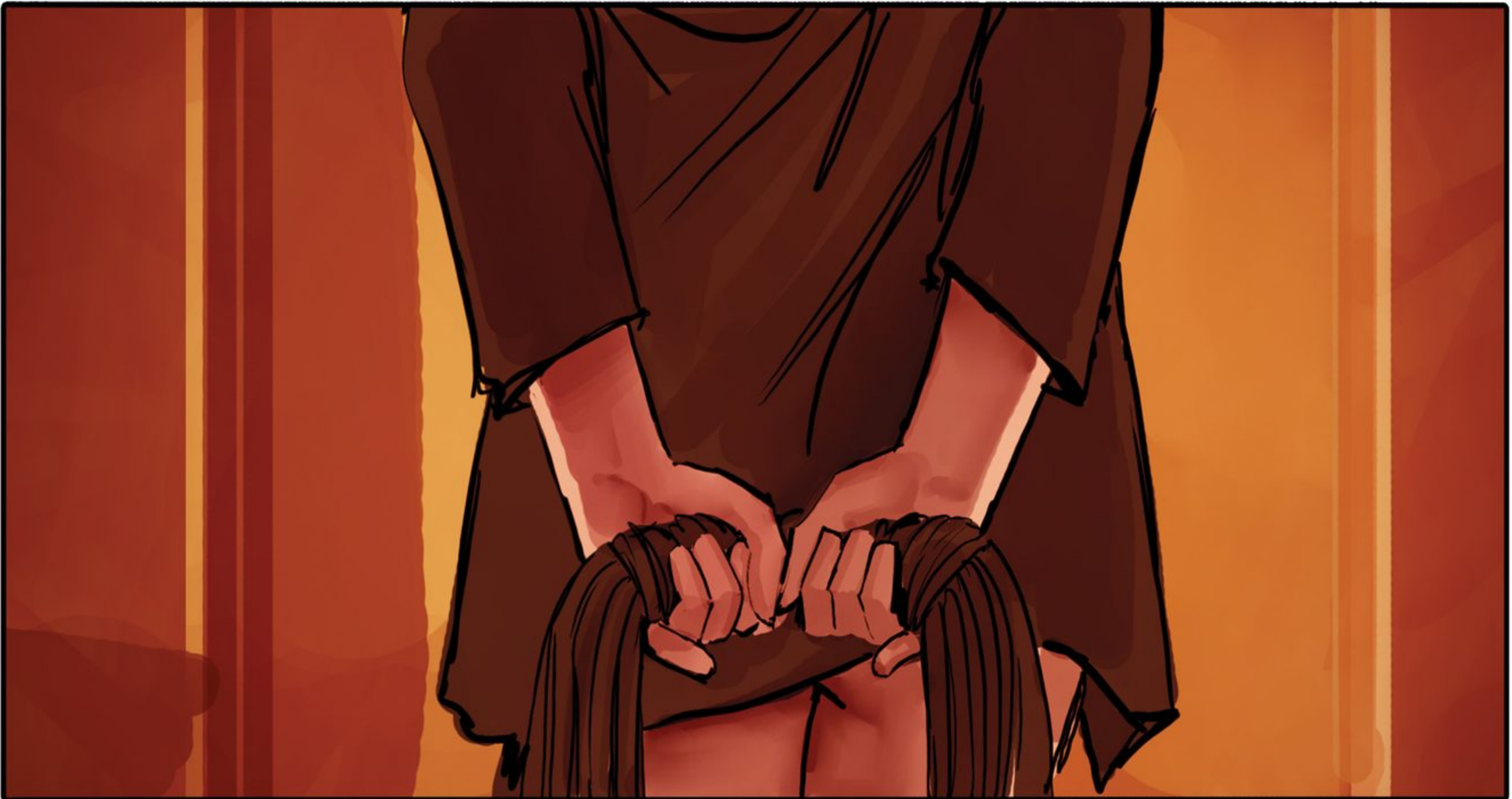


GET NAKED AND WAIT FOR ME IN YOUR ROOM!

NAKED?







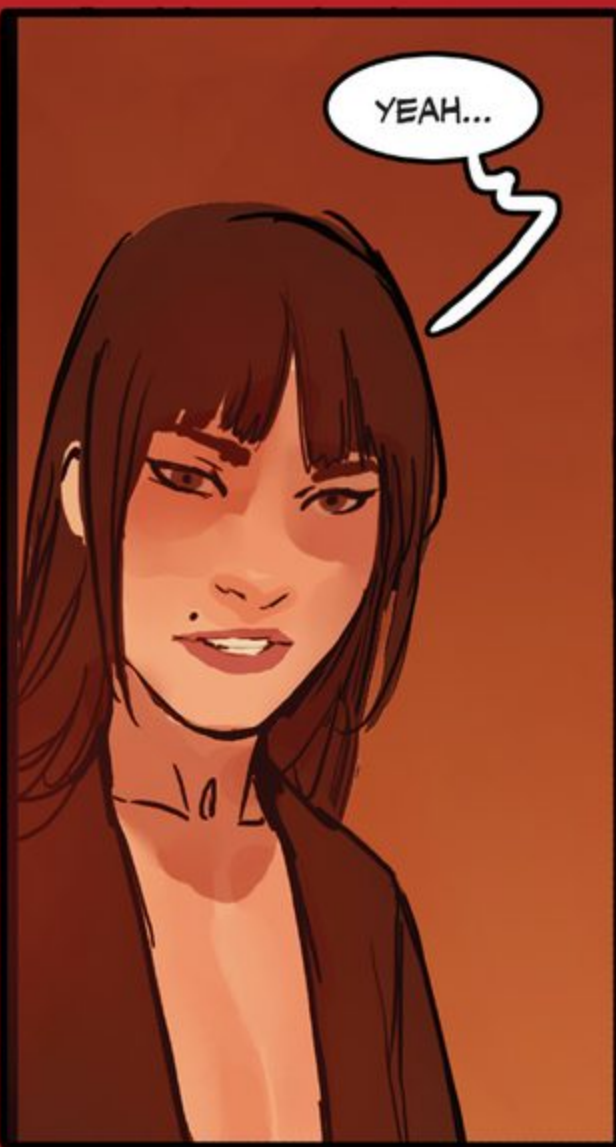




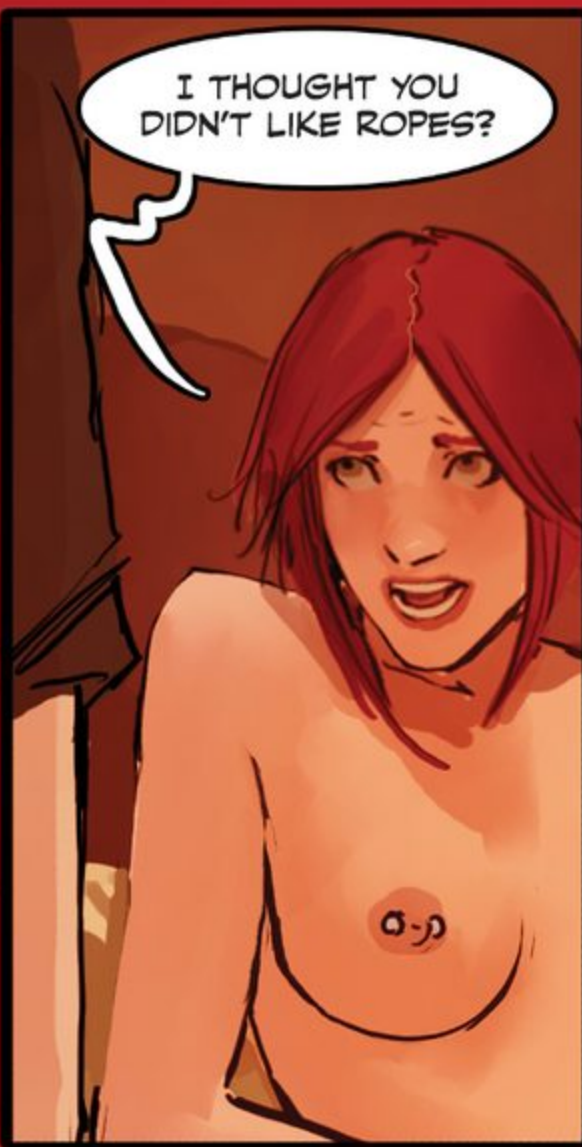




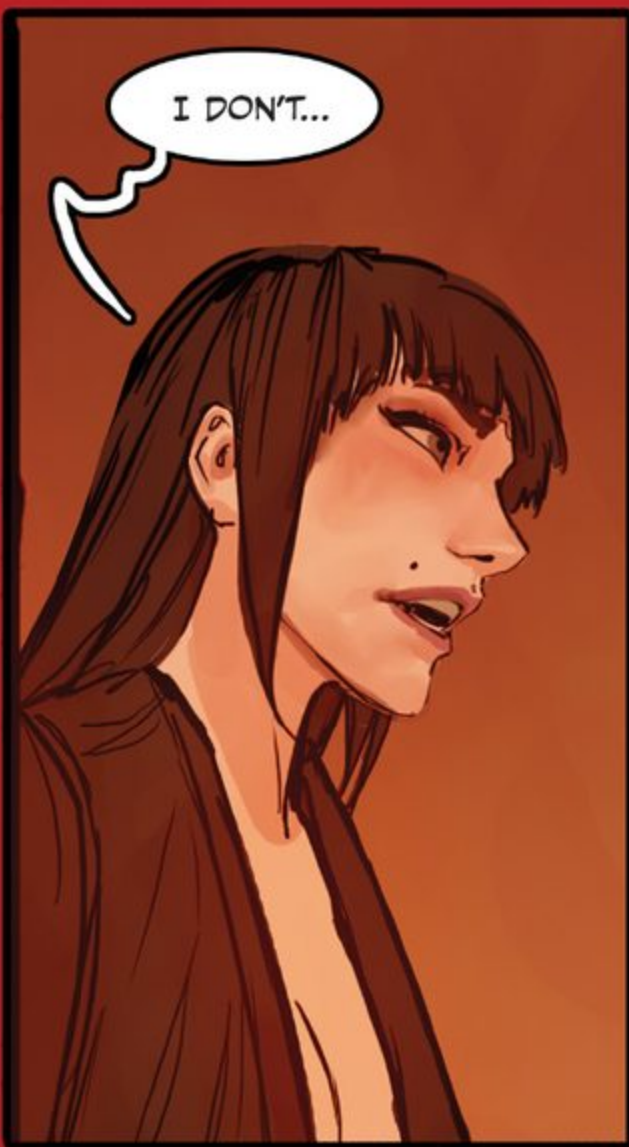
ROPES?



YEAH...



I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T LIKE ROPES?



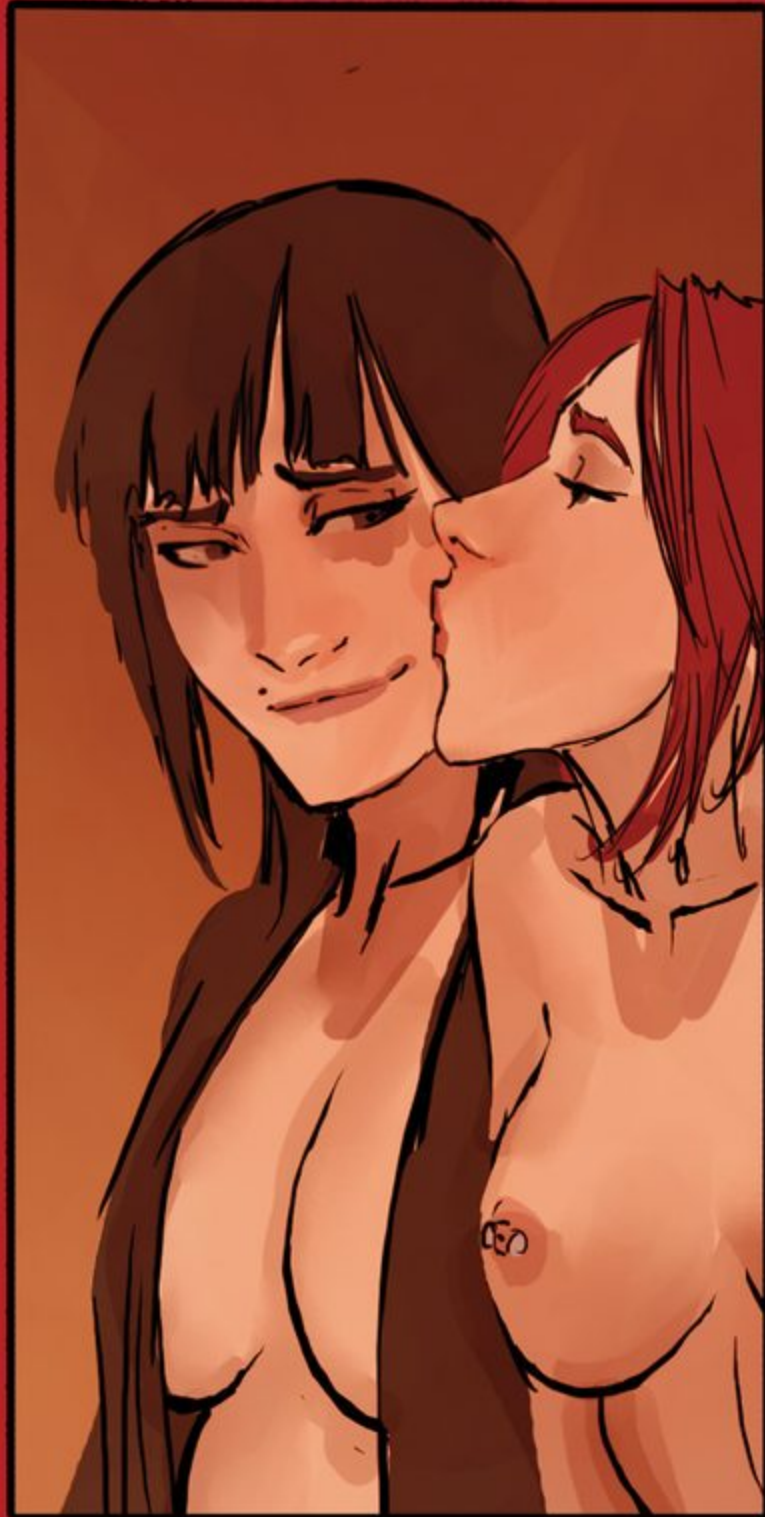
I DON'T...



BUT...YOU KNOW I KINDA HOPED...

MAYBE YOU COULD CHANGE THAT.

MAYBE NEW, BETTER MEMORIES, COULD OVERWRITE OLD REGRETS.



SO...HOW ARE YOUR NIPPLES?

HEALED...ISH.



PUT ON THE CAPS!

DO I HAVE TO?



YES!



THAT EVENING  
WAS ONE OF THE  
FIVE GREATEST,  
MOST WONDERFUL  
SEXUAL EXPERIENCES  
OF MY LIFE.



AND I ADORE  
EVERY MEMORY OF IT.







I LOVE REMEMBERING  
THE INTIMACY OF THE  
ENTIRE RITUAL.

REMEMBERING  
HER TOUCH...

THE BITE OF  
THE ROPES...

THEY  
WERE  
WARM  
MEMORIES...





A LITTLE FUZZY...

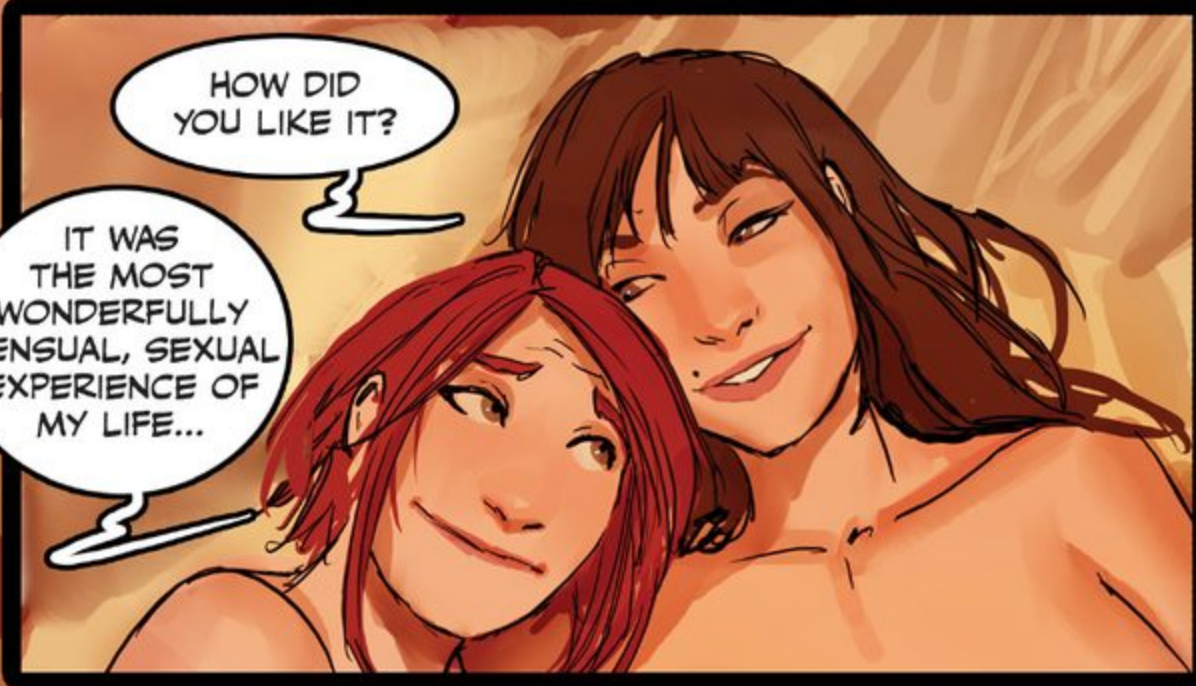
THEY WERE  
MEMORIES OF A  
SUNSET.

OUR SUNSET.

AND AFTER  
THE SUN SETS...  
WELL...

STILL  
DON'T LIKE  
ROPES?

THE PATH TO  
HEALING IS A  
LONG ONE.  
MIGHT NEED  
MULTIPLE SESSIONS,  
BUT WE MIGHT BE  
ON TO SOMETHING  
HERE.



HOW DID  
YOU LIKE IT?

IT WAS  
THE MOST  
WONDERFULLY  
SENSUAL, SEXUAL  
EXPERIENCE OF  
MY LIFE...



THANK YOU...

...  
WELCOME?



WHEN I WAS A KID ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS I LEARNED ABOUT SOCIAL INTERACTIONS WAS: WHEN SOMEONE DOES SOMETHING NICE FOR YOU... YOU SAY, "THANK YOU!"

IT IS RIGHT!

IT IS POLITE!

AND AFTER SOME BRAINRESETTING ORGASMS...IT WAS PRETTY MUCH THE BEST I COULD THINK OF.

A SMART WOMAN LIKE ALLY WOULD EASILY UNDERSTAND THIS.

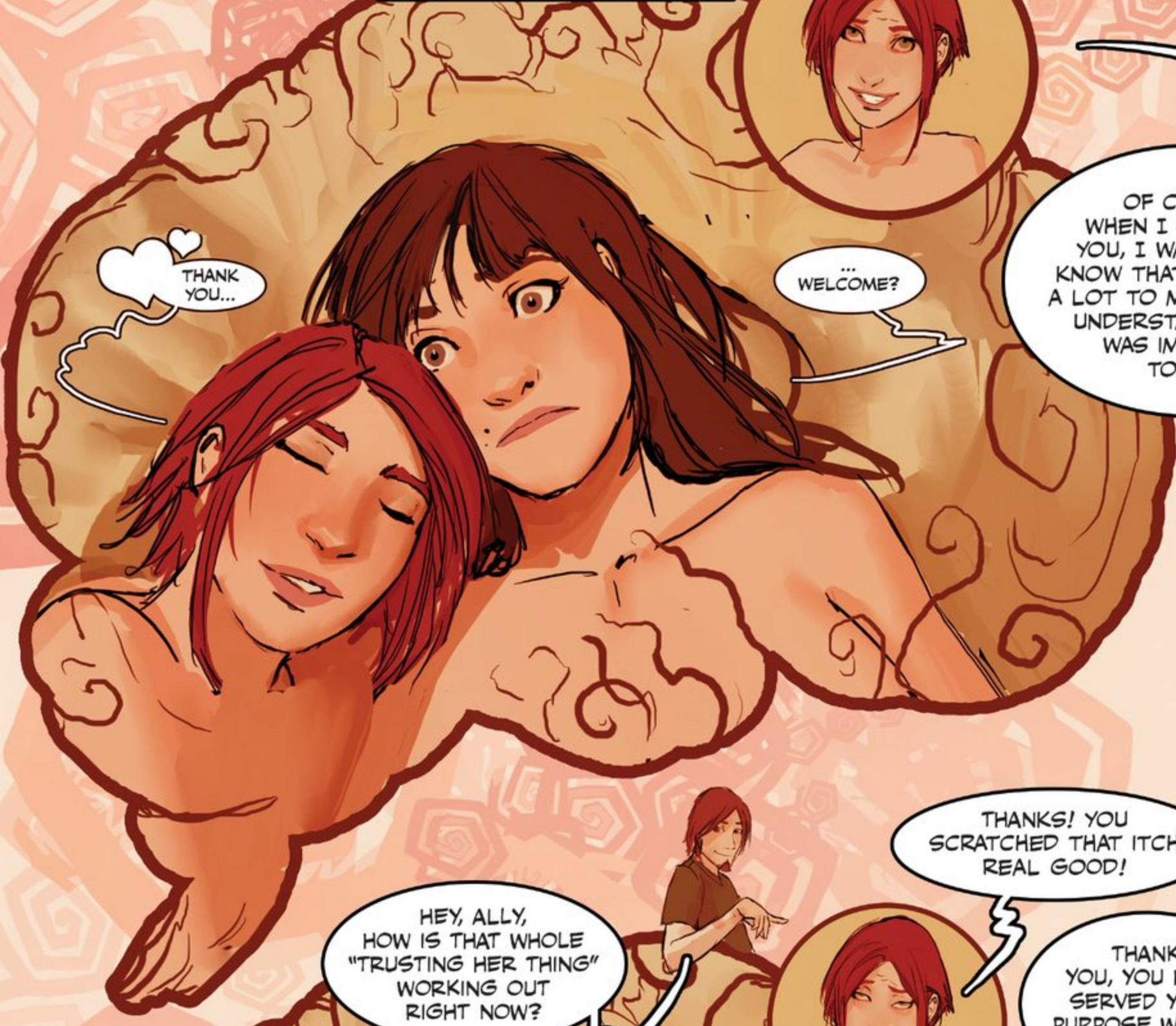
BUUUUT THERE WAS A PROBLEM...

EMOTIONS AND LOGIC OFTEN TRAVEL DOWN SEPARATE ROADS.

LET ME PUT IT THIS WAY: THIS WOULD BE ALLY'S BRAIN ON LOGIC!



OF COURSE, WHEN I SAY THANK YOU, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT THIS MEANT A LOT TO ME AND THAT I UNDERSTAND THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO YOU.



THANK YOU...

WELCOME?

HEY, ALLY, HOW IS THAT WHOLE "TRUSTING HER THING" WORKING OUT RIGHT NOW?

BUT *THIS*, THIS IS ALLY'S BRAIN ON UNREQUITED LOVE!

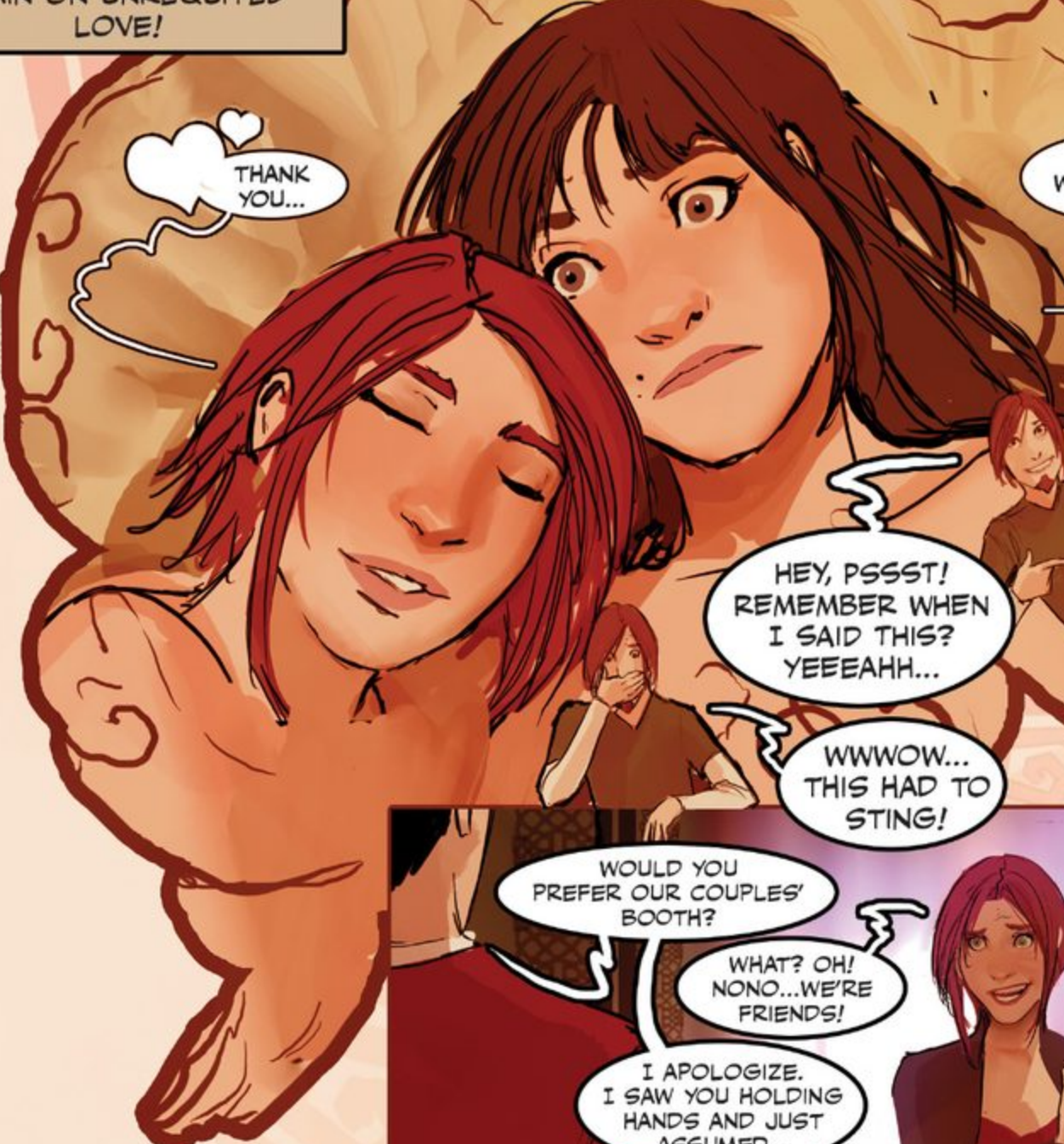


THANKS! YOU SCRATCHED THAT ITCH REAL GOOD!

THANK YOU, YOU HAVE SERVED YOUR PURPOSE WELL... BUDDY!



WELCOME?



THANK YOU...

HEY, PSSST! REMEMBER WHEN I SAID THIS? YEEEEHH...

WWWOW... THIS HAD TO STING!

OKAY THEN TELL ME! WHAT DID SHE DO FOR YOU SPECIFICALLY?

AND BEFORE YOU SAY IT, BEING A *SUB* DOESN'T COUNT!



WOULD YOU PREFER OUR COUPLES' BOOTH?

WHAT? OH! NONO...WE'RE FRIENDS!

I APOLOGIZE. I SAW YOU HOLDING HANDS AND JUST ASSUMED...

UNREQUITED LOVE... IT TENDS TO GO HAND IN HAND WITH SELF DOUBT.

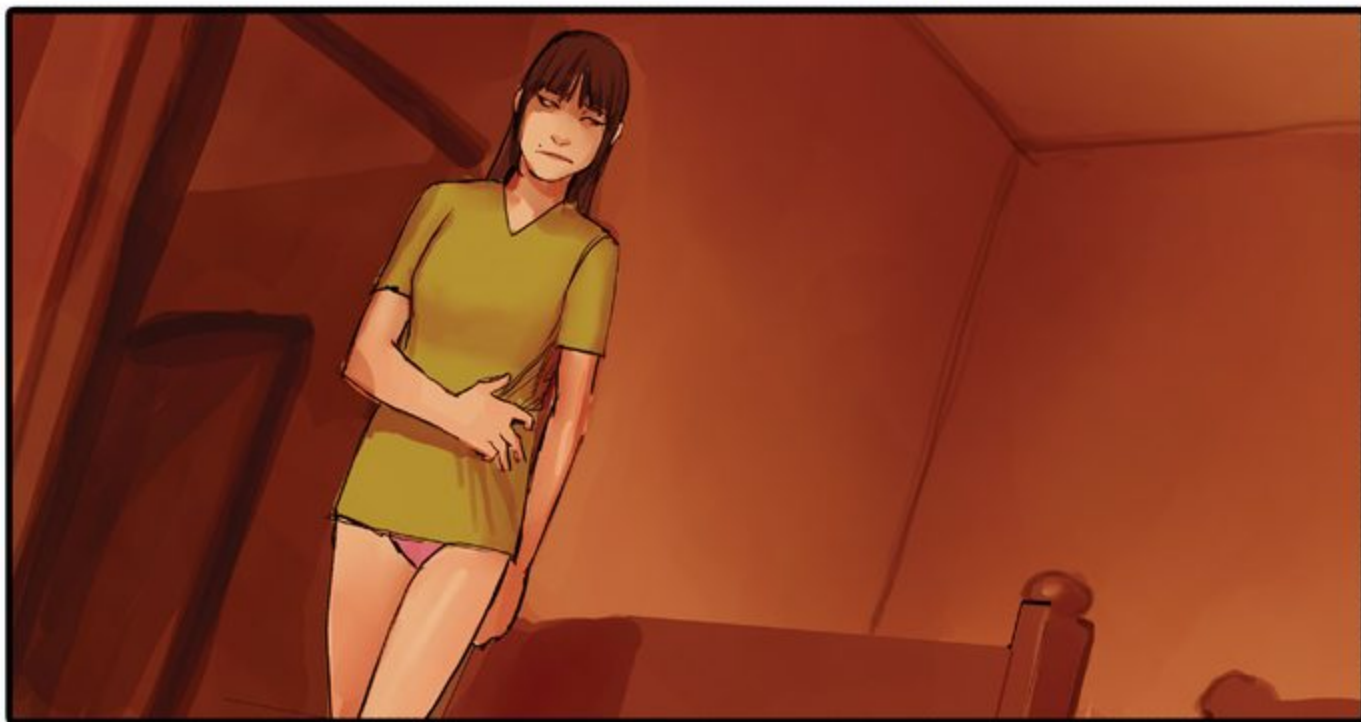
AND YEAH, FOR SOME REASON, ALLY'S SELF-DOUBT TOOK FORM OF A TINY ALAN...

WHO KNEW?

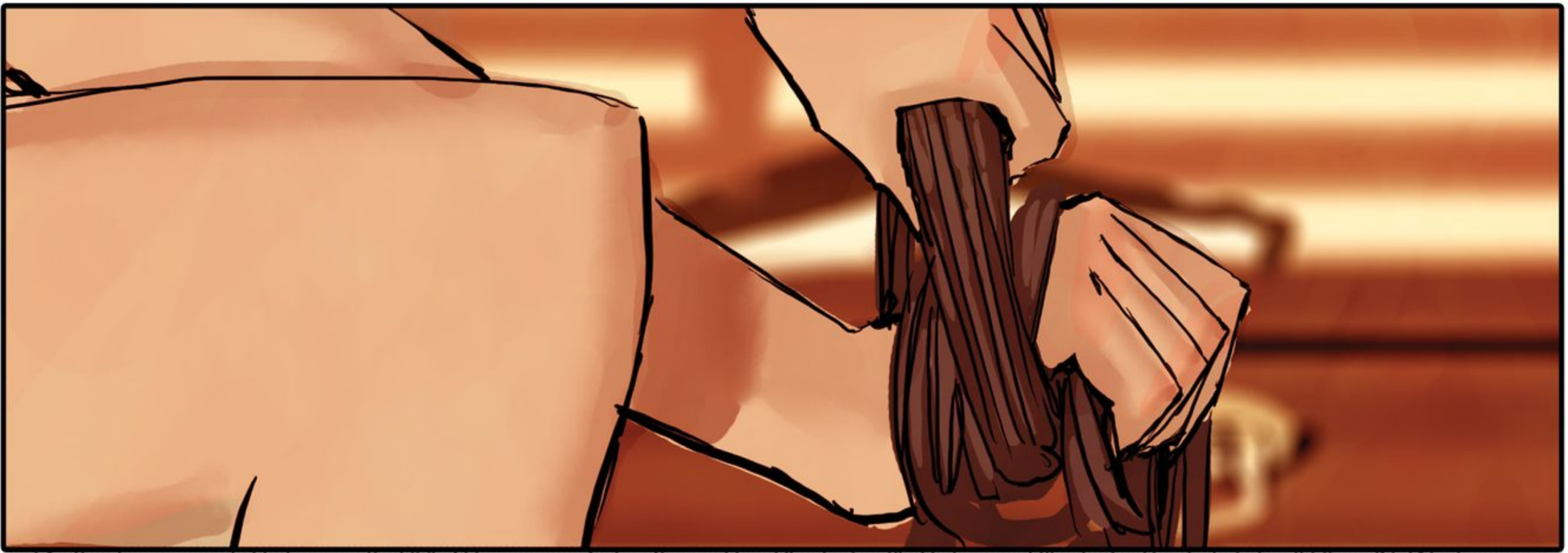


SO AAANYHOW...

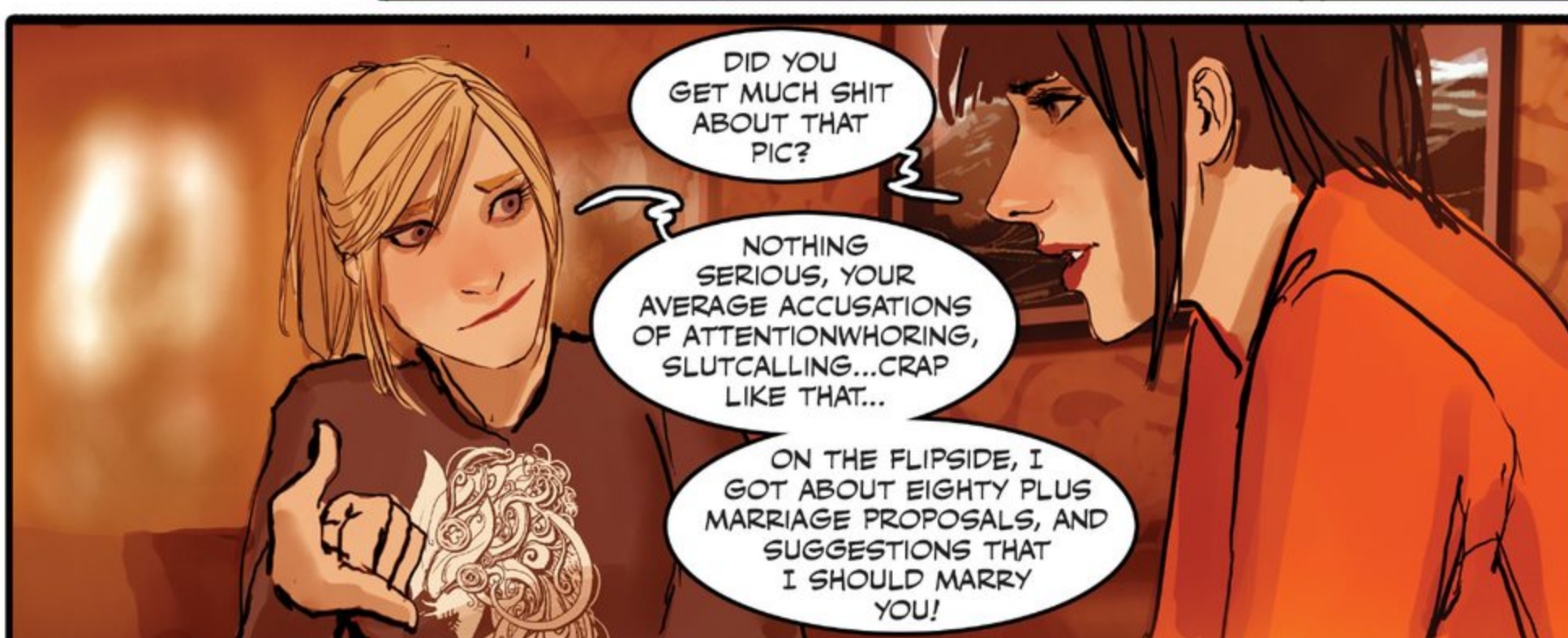
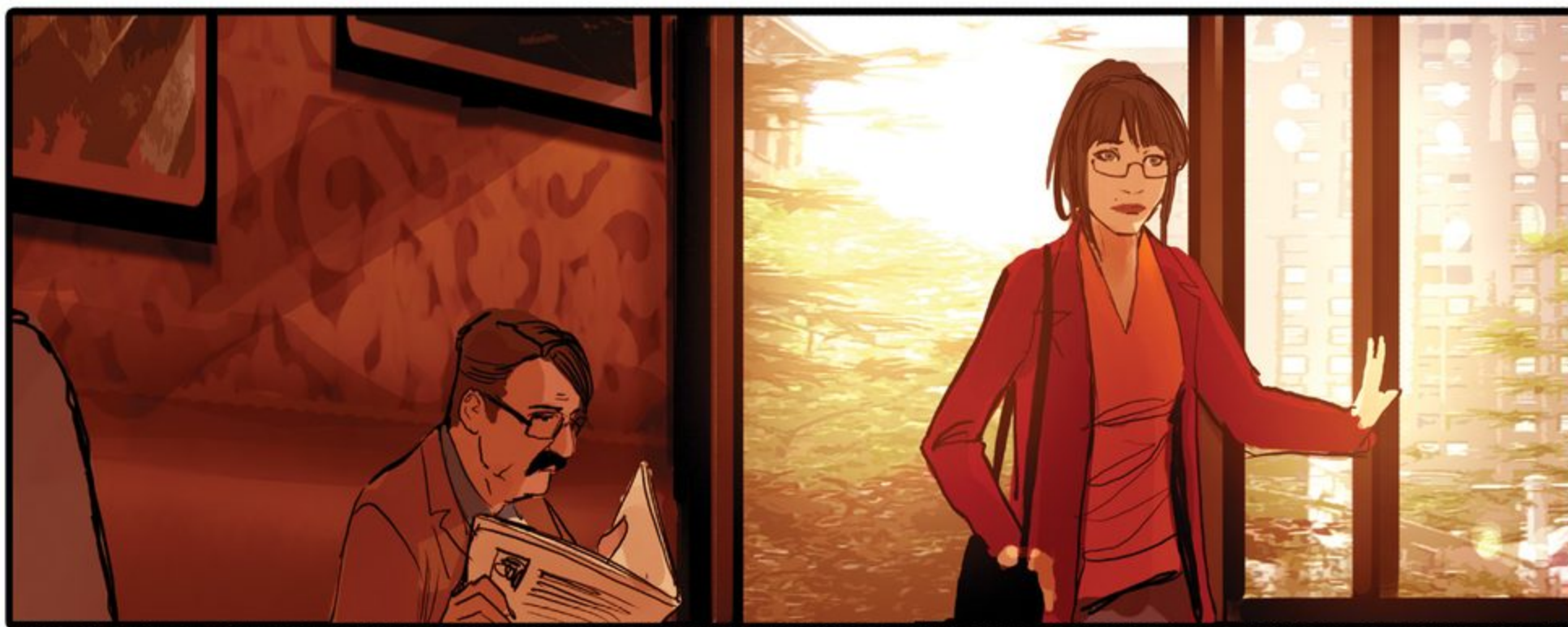
THAT SECOND BRAIN  
WAS RUNNING THE SHOW  
FROM THERE ON!















OH, NO! I'D HAVE TO BANG YOU AT LEAST THREE TIMES BEFORE I WOULD EVEN CONSIDER MARRYING YOU!

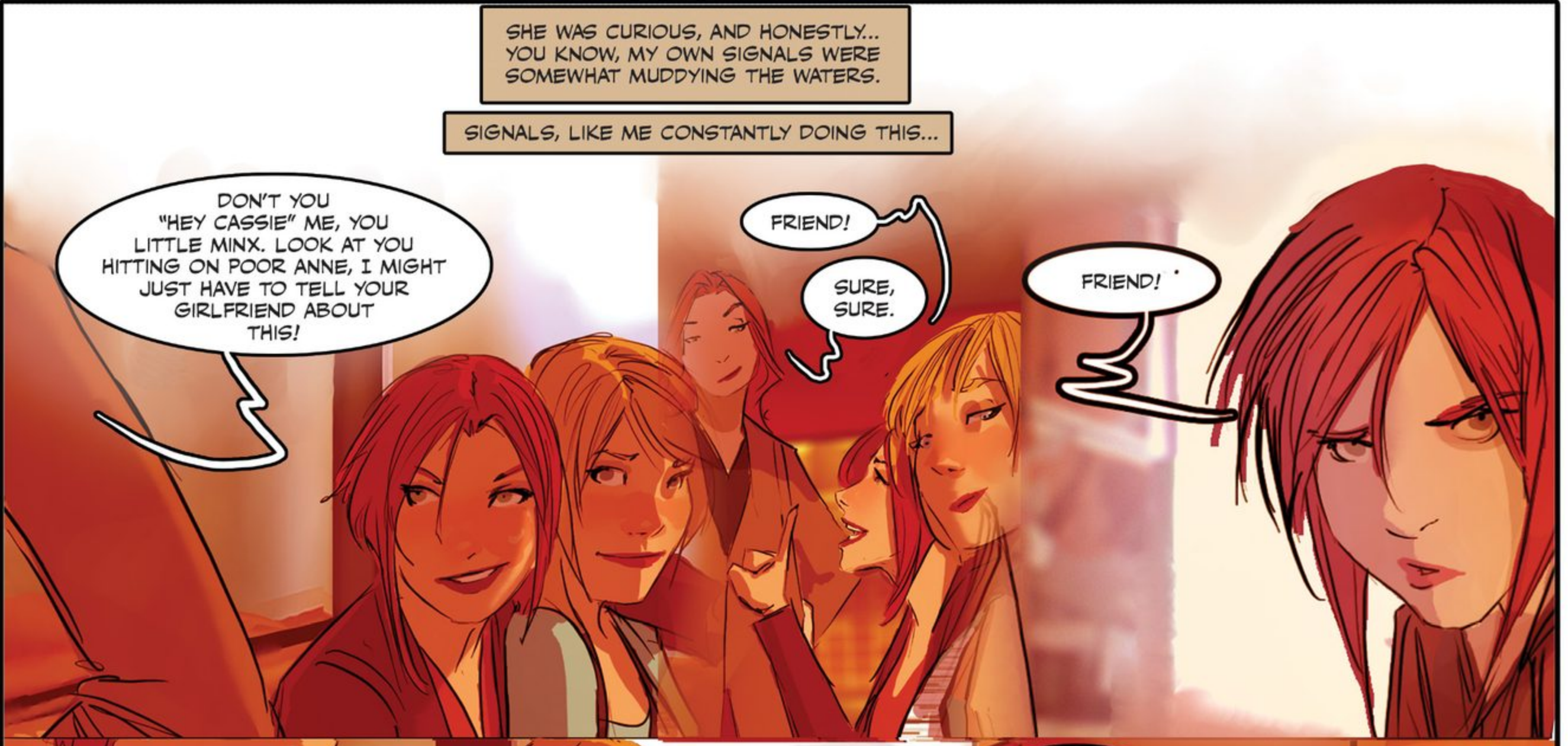
IT'S ONLY *POLITE*, YOU KNOW!

OF COURSE... SO THIS BANGING...

WAS ANNE KINDA SORTA FLIRTING?

OH HELL YES!

AND EVEN NOW, IN HINDSIGHT I CAN'T BLAME HER.



SHE WAS CURIOUS, AND HONESTLY... YOU KNOW, MY OWN SIGNALS WERE SOMEWHAT MUDDYING THE WATERS.

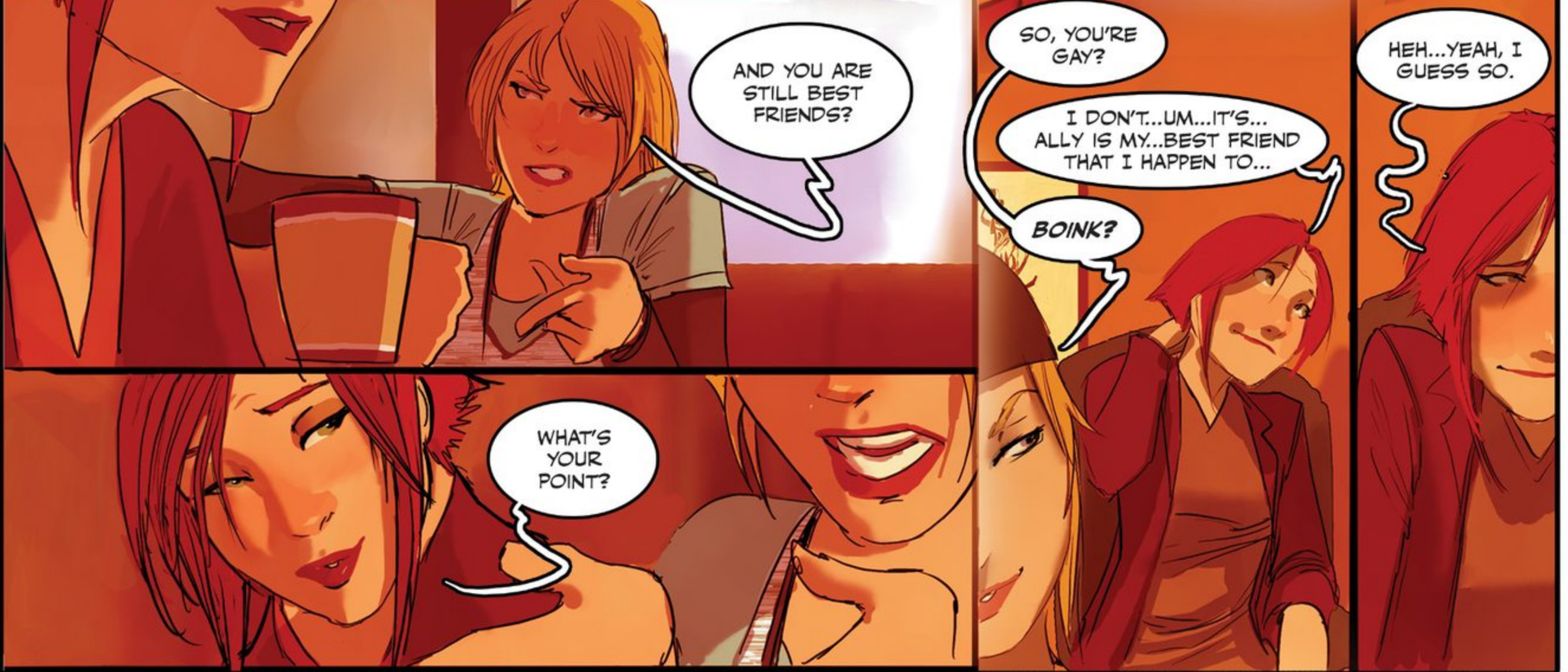
SIGNALS, LIKE ME CONSTANTLY DOING THIS...

DON'T YOU "HEY CASSIE" ME, YOU LITTLE MINX. LOOK AT YOU HITTING ON POOR ANNE, I MIGHT JUST HAVE TO TELL YOUR GIRLFRIEND ABOUT THIS!

FRIEND!

SURE, SURE.

FRIEND! \*



AND YOU ARE STILL BEST FRIENDS?

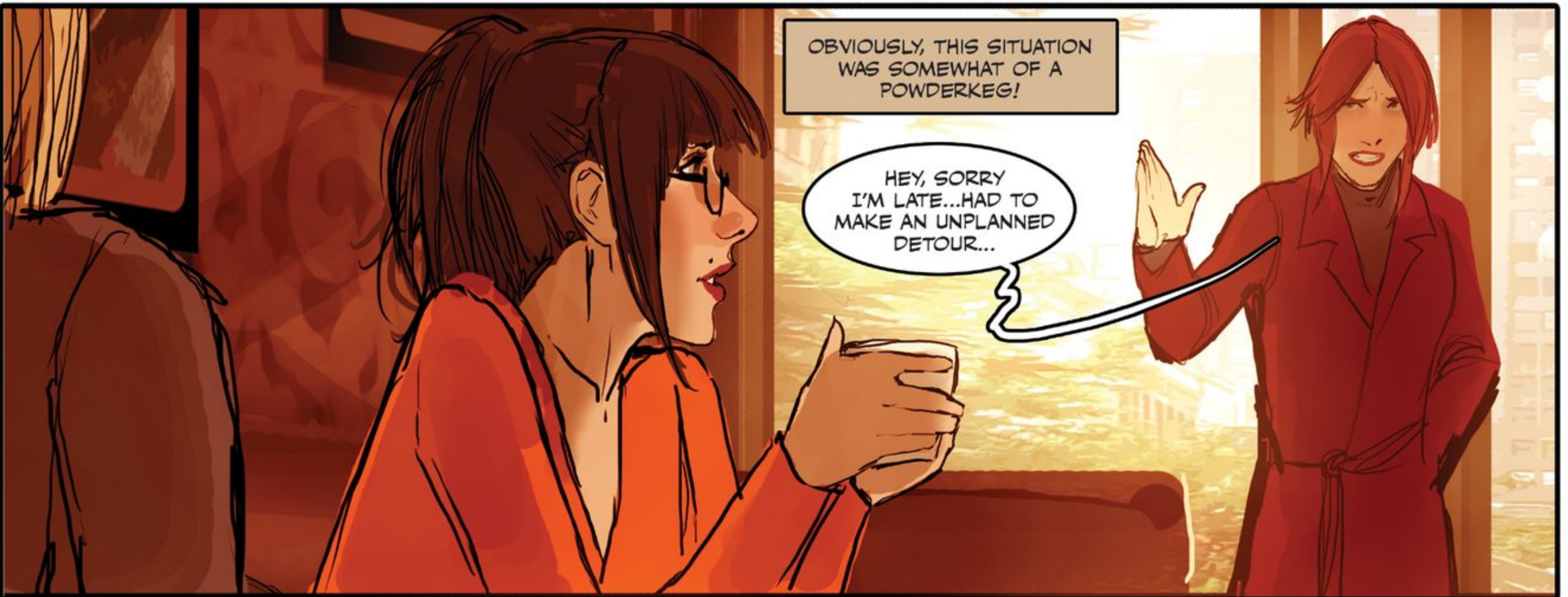
SO, YOU'RE GAY?

I DON'T...UM...IT'S... ALLY IS MY...BEST FRIEND THAT I HAPPEN TO...

BOINK?

HEH...YEAH, I GUESS SO.

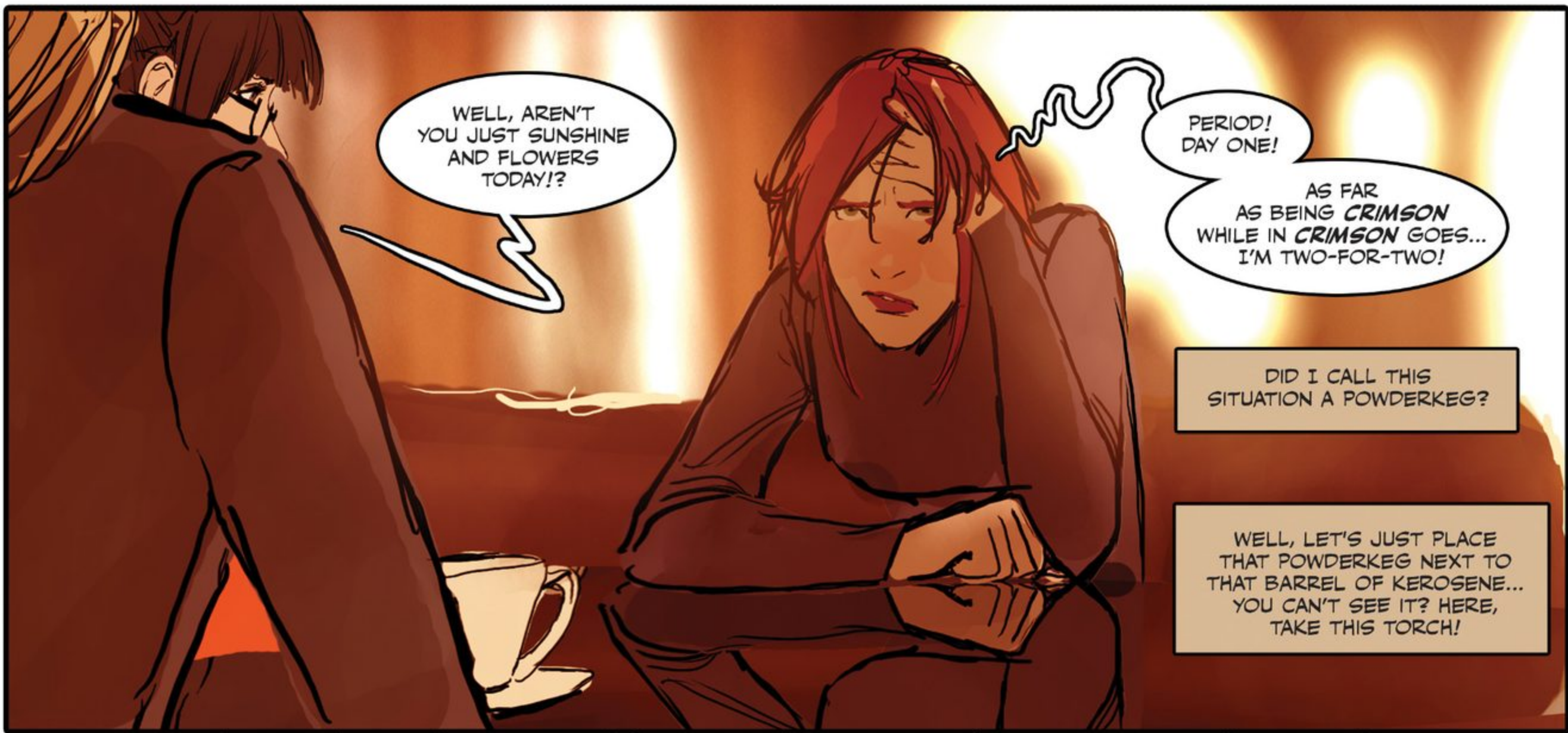
WHAT'S YOUR POINT?



OBVIOUSLY, THIS SITUATION WAS SOMEWHAT OF A POWDERKEG!

HEY, SORRY I'M LATE...HAD TO MAKE AN UNPLANNED DETOUR...





WELL, AREN'T YOU JUST SUNSHINE AND FLOWERS TODAY!?

PERIOD!  
DAY ONE!

AS FAR AS BEING **CRIMSON** WHILE IN **CRIMSON** GOES... I'M TWO-FOR-TWO!

DID I CALL THIS SITUATION A POWDERKEG?

WELL, LET'S JUST PLACE THAT POWDERKEG NEXT TO THAT BARREL OF KEROSENE... YOU CAN'T SEE IT? HERE, TAKE THIS TORCH!



HUH?

YOU KNOW... WE'RE GOING TO THE PARTY AT THE CRIMSON THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW?

YOU ASKED ME TWO WEEKS AGO?

AND ME BEING CRIMSON... AS IN HAVING A PERIOD AT THE CLUB AGAIN.



NO, NO, I GET IT!



DID YOU FORGET ABOUT IT?

NO, I'M JUST A BIT SCATTERBRAINED TODAY, SORRY!

OH...KAY!



SO, YOU ARE GOING TO THE HALLOWEEN PARTY?

YEAH, YOU GOING TOO?





I WAS THINKING OF IT. MAYBE TAGGING ALONG WITH CASSIE AND TOM, BUT EVER SINCE HIS BROTHER GOT A KID... THEY'VE BEEN EXTRA... I DUNNO... WEIRD.

SO, I DON'T WANT TO BE A THIRD WHEEL...



UMM... YOU CAN GO WITH US...IF YOU WANT!

HEY, REMEMBER THAT "LOGICAL BRAIN VERSUS BRAIN-ON-UNREQUITED-LOVE" THING?

YEEEAHHH...

HERE'S MY LOGICAL BRAIN!



UMM... YOU CAN GO WITH US...IF YOU WANT!



THINK ABOUT IT, LISA...YOU KINDA DRAGGED THIS GIRL INTO MY LIFE IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE. HELL, YOU INVITED ME HERE TODAY...I CAN'T BE RUDE!

AND THEN, OF COURSE, THERE WAS MY BRAIN ON UNREQUITED LOVE:

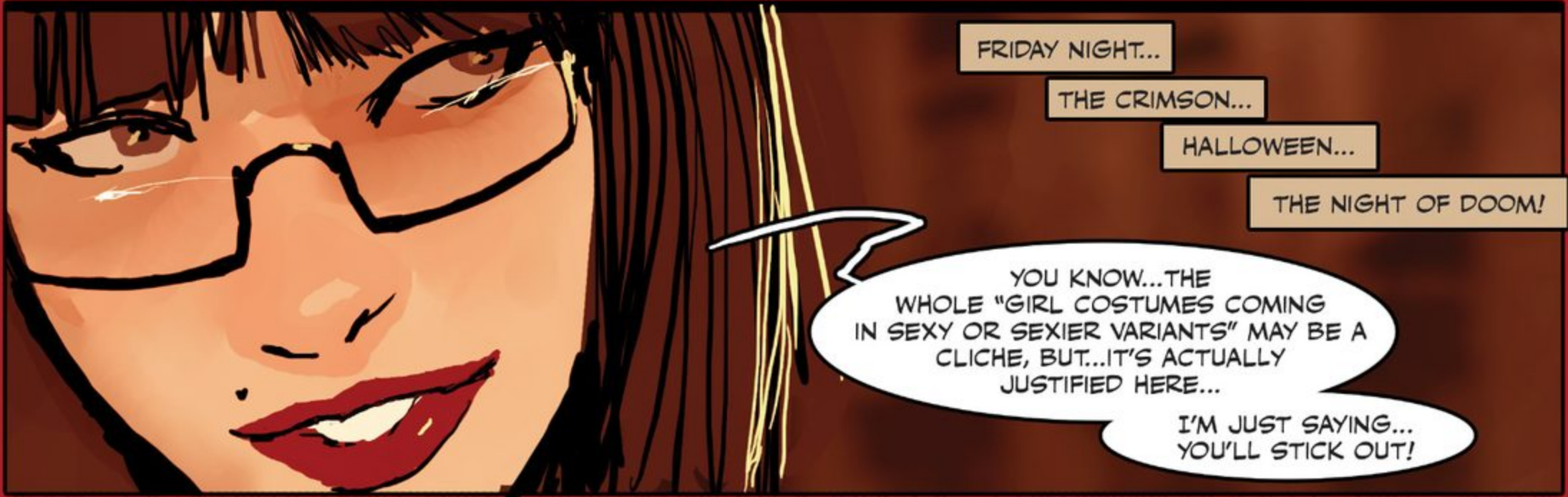
UMM... YOU CAN GO WITH US...IF YOU WANT!



HEEEY...YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY? THE MORE THE MERRIER, I MEAN WHAT ARE FRIENDS FOR? IT'S NOT LIKE I CALLED YOU OUT FOR LIKE A DATE OR ANYTHING!

TAKE A WILD GUESS WHICH ONE WON OUT? NOW, I'LL SPARE YOU THE NEXT DAY'S MARATHON OF PETTY PASSIVE AGGRESSIONS AND CYNICISM COATED "THANK YOUS" AND JUST SKIP TO THE MAIN EVENT!





FRIDAY NIGHT...

THE CRIMSON...

HALLOWEEN...

THE NIGHT OF DOOM!

YOU KNOW...THE WHOLE "GIRL COSTUMES COMING IN SEXY OR SEXIER VARIANTS" MAY BE A CLICHE, BUT...IT'S ACTUALLY JUSTIFIED HERE...

I'M JUST SAYING... YOU'LL STICK OUT!



I GOT HANDCUFFS!



AND I GOT A JUSTICE STICK!

TRUST ME, I'LL BLEND IN JUST FINE!

WHATEVER YOU SAY, OFFICER!

HEH, ALRIGHT, LADIES! LET'S DO THIS!

YEAH...LET'S!



SO, IT TURNS OUT THAT EVENING WAS MORE THAN JUST A HALLOWEEN PARTY NIGHT AT THE CRIMSON. IT ENDED UP BEING A SMALL ENGAGEMENT PARTY AS WELL.

BIG NIGHT FOR A LOT OF US IT SEEMS.



SO, YOU GUYS GONNA DO A BONDAGE-THEMED WEDDING?

HELL NO! I DON'T THINK THAT WOULD GO OVER GREAT WITH OUR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS.

WELL... FRIENDS WOULD PROBABLY BE OKAY WITH IT, BUT GRANNY LORRAINE WOULD FREAK OUT!



OH, BY THE WAY, CASSIE, I LOVE YOUR OUTFIT. A GINGER DEVIL OUT FOR SOULS... VERY NATURAL FOR YOU!

FUNNY! YOU KNOW WHAT ELSE IS FUNNY? MY NEW T-SHIRT! YOU'LL LOVE IT!

WELL, YOU TWO CERTAINLY MATCHED UP.

YEAH, I GUESS WE DID!



SO, DID HE LIKE, TIE YOU UP BEFORE POPPING THE QUESTION?

YOU HAVE A **VERY** VIVID IMAGINATION!

I'M A **WRITER**...

HEH...



WHAT ABOUT YOU? ANY ROMANCE, OR STILL PLAYING THE FIELD?

I WAS NEVER PLAYING THE FIELD. IT WAS JUST ALLY FOR ME.







AND IT STILL  
IS JUST ALLY...



OKAY, EVERYONE  
SAY: I DESPERATELY  
CRAVE ATTENTION!

FUCK  
YOU, CASSIE!

YEAH...JUST  
ALLY...



YOU KNOW THAT WEIRD  
SLOW MOTION SOUND?

I SWEAR I COULD HEAR  
MY STOMACH MAKING IT.

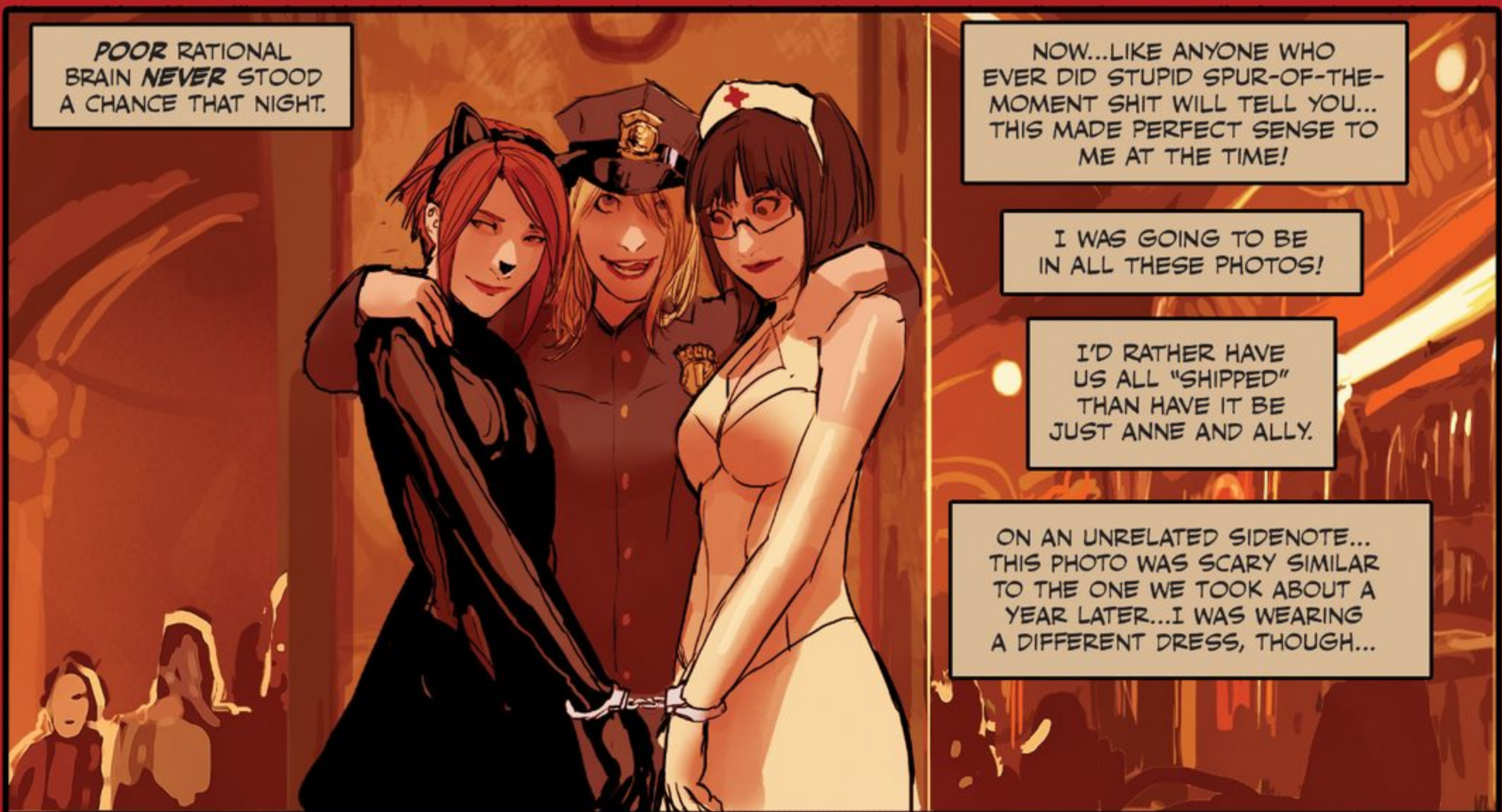
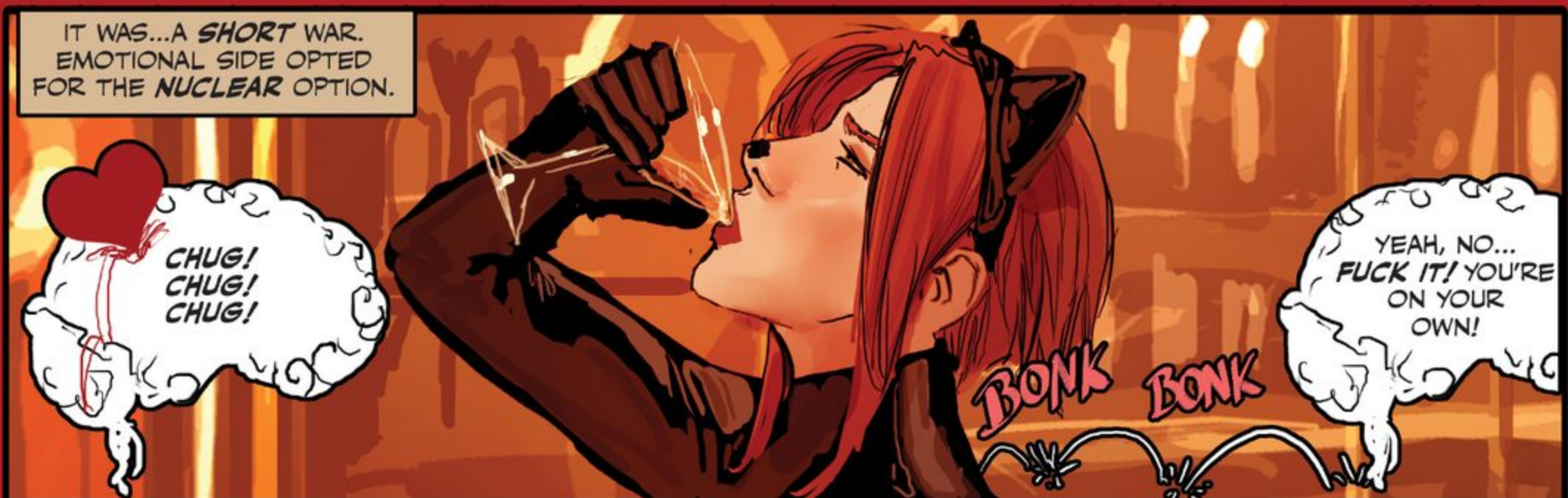
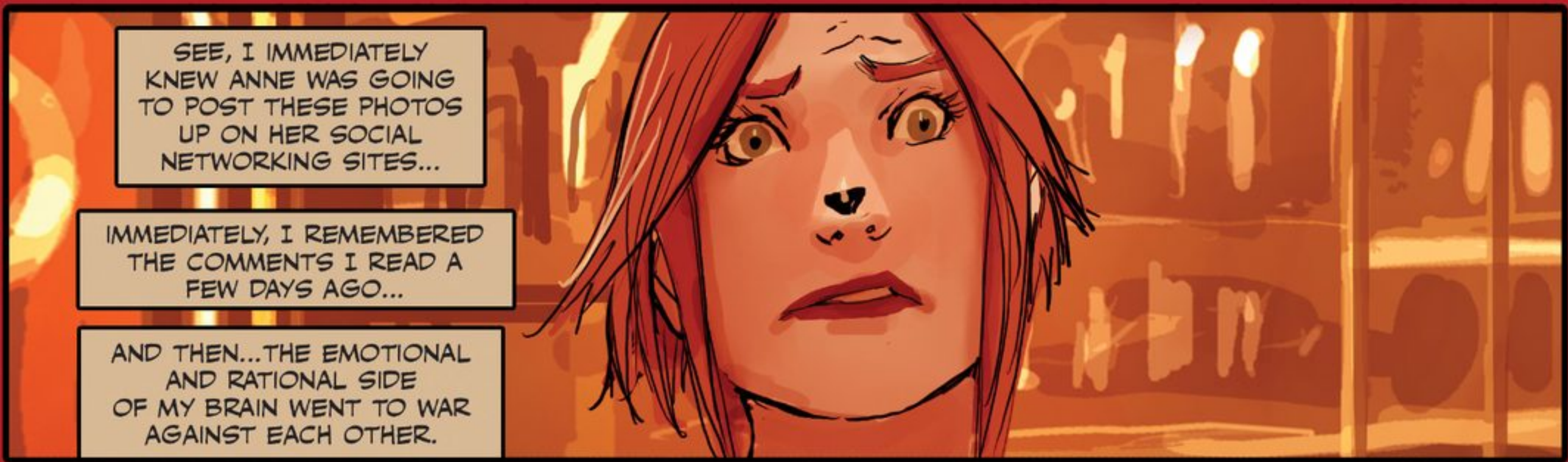
SOUNDS KINDA LIKE:  
PWOOOOOOOOOM...

SOOO,  
ARE WE DONE  
HERE OFFICER?

MA'AM, ARE  
YOU RESISTING  
ARREST?

AND WHAT  
IF I AM?









JUST BECAUSE WE WERE GOING THROUGH SOME SHIT, WAS NO REASON TO MAKE ANNE FEEL LIKE THE THIRD WHEEL.

SO, A FEW DRINKS IN, I WAS DOING JUST FINE...



HERE YOU GO. ONE VODKA CRANBERRY!

THANKS!

BUT ALLY...



ALLY STARTED NOTICING THINGS...



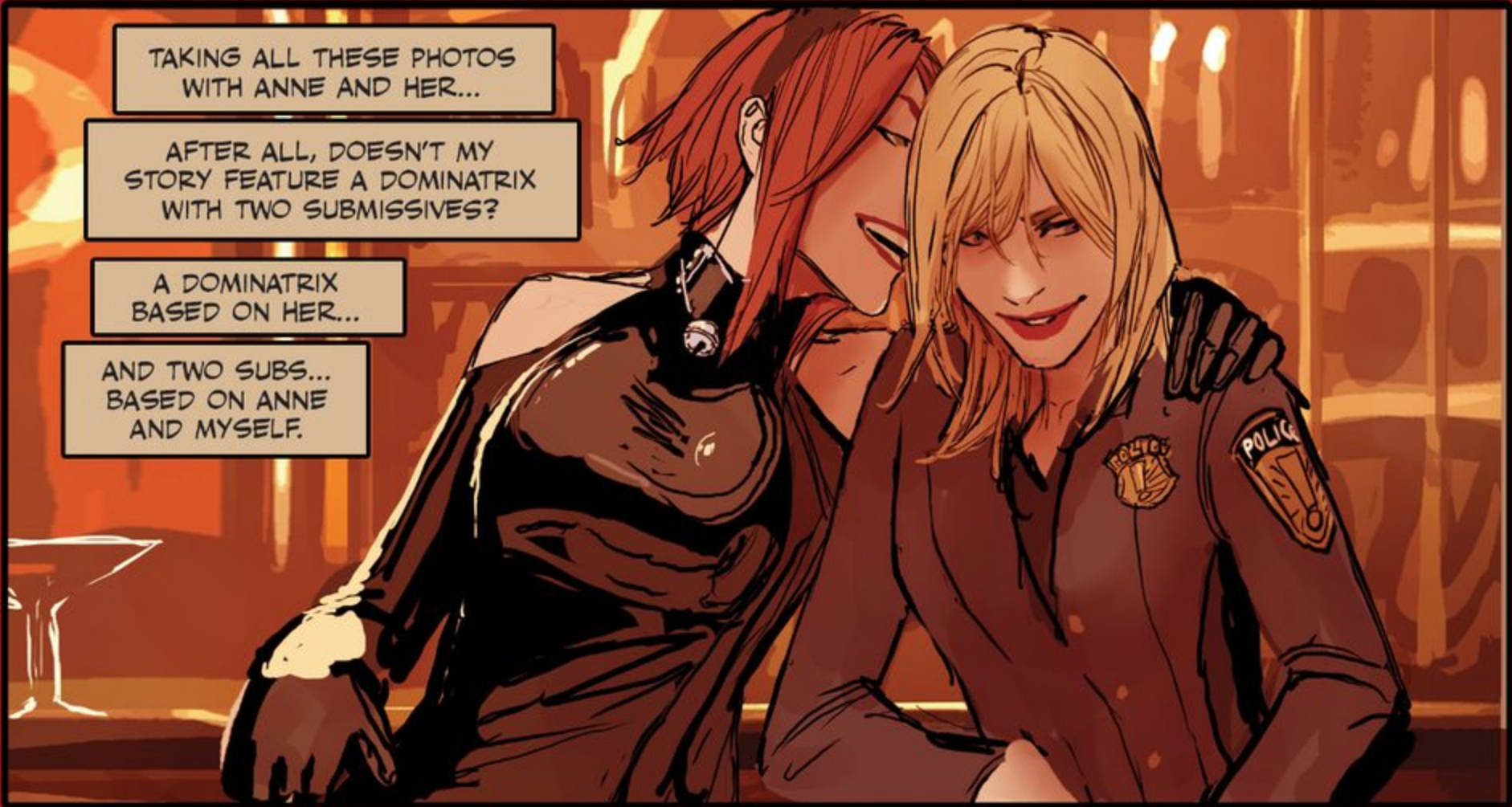
THINGS THAT HAD BEEN BUGGING HER FOR A WHILE.

EVER SINCE I DID THAT STORY ABOUT HER AND ANNE, A NAGGING SUSPICION HAD BEEN FESTERING IN THE BACK OF HER MIND.

IT GOT WORSE OVER TIME: TAKING HER TO MEET ANNE...

TALKING ABOUT ANNE...

INVITING HER TO LUNCH WITH ANNE...



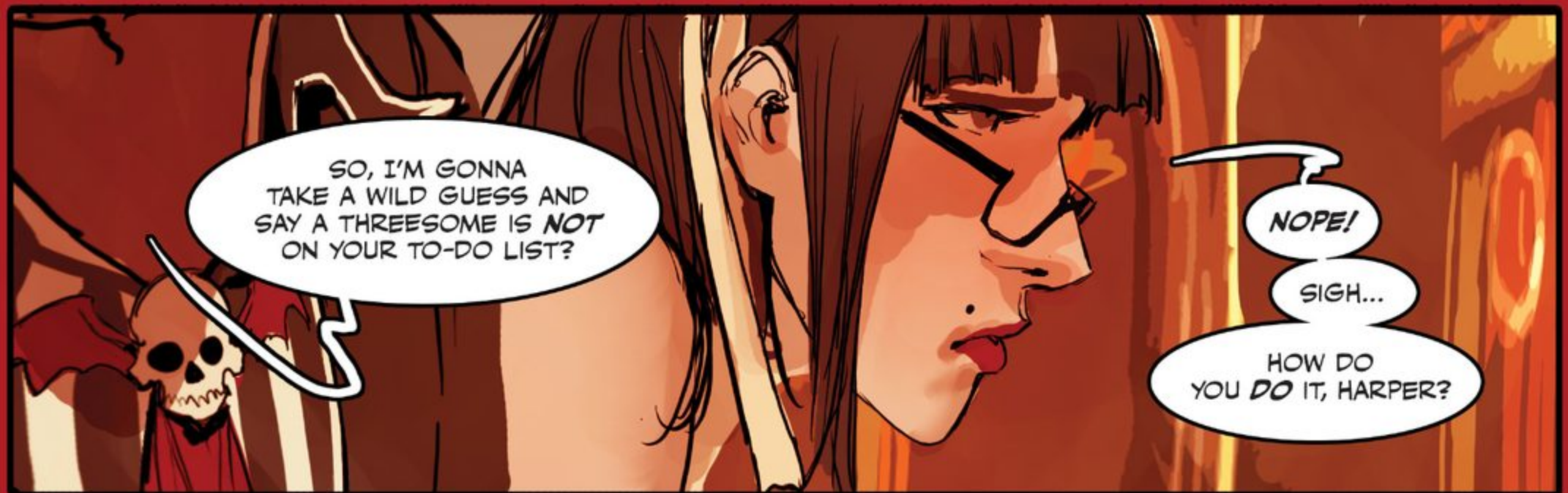
TAKING ALL THESE PHOTOS WITH ANNE AND HER...

AFTER ALL, DOESN'T MY STORY FEATURE A DOMINATRIX WITH TWO SUBMISSIVES?

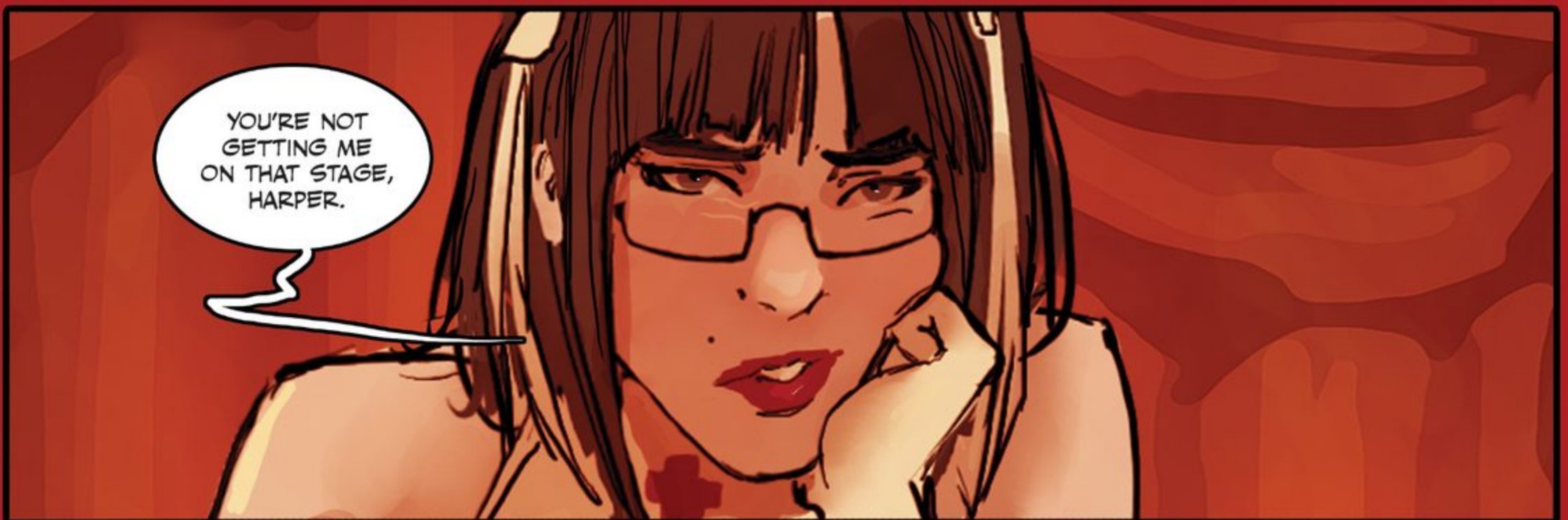
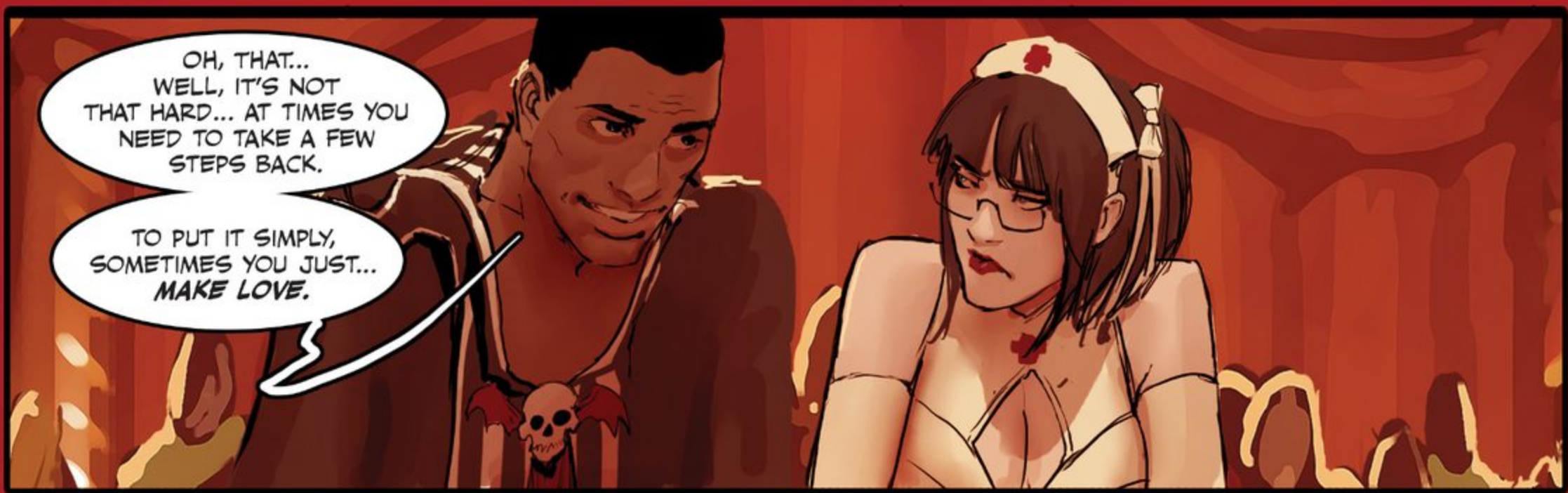
A DOMINATRIX BASED ON HER...

AND TWO SUBS... BASED ON ANNE AND MYSELF.













RIGHT! THE ALAN THING... WE'LL GET TO THAT ONE.

BUT NOT JUST YET...





MEANWHILE, AT THE CRIMSON  
WE WERE TREATED TO A...PLAY,  
I GUESS, BY SOME HIGH-END  
PERFORMERS.

LADY  
HELLSONG,  
I PRESUME!

MOST PEOPLE ATTENDING  
THE PARTY KNEW OF THEM  
AND OBSERVED THEIR  
LITTLE...PERFORMANCE  
WITH ADORATION.

WE WERE  
EAGERLY EXPECTING  
YOU!

OVERACTING!  
YOUR REIGN  
OF TERROR ENDS  
TONIGHT,  
MONSTER!

THEY WATCHED IT  
IN SILENCE...

ANNE AND  
ALLY, ON THE  
OTHER HAND...

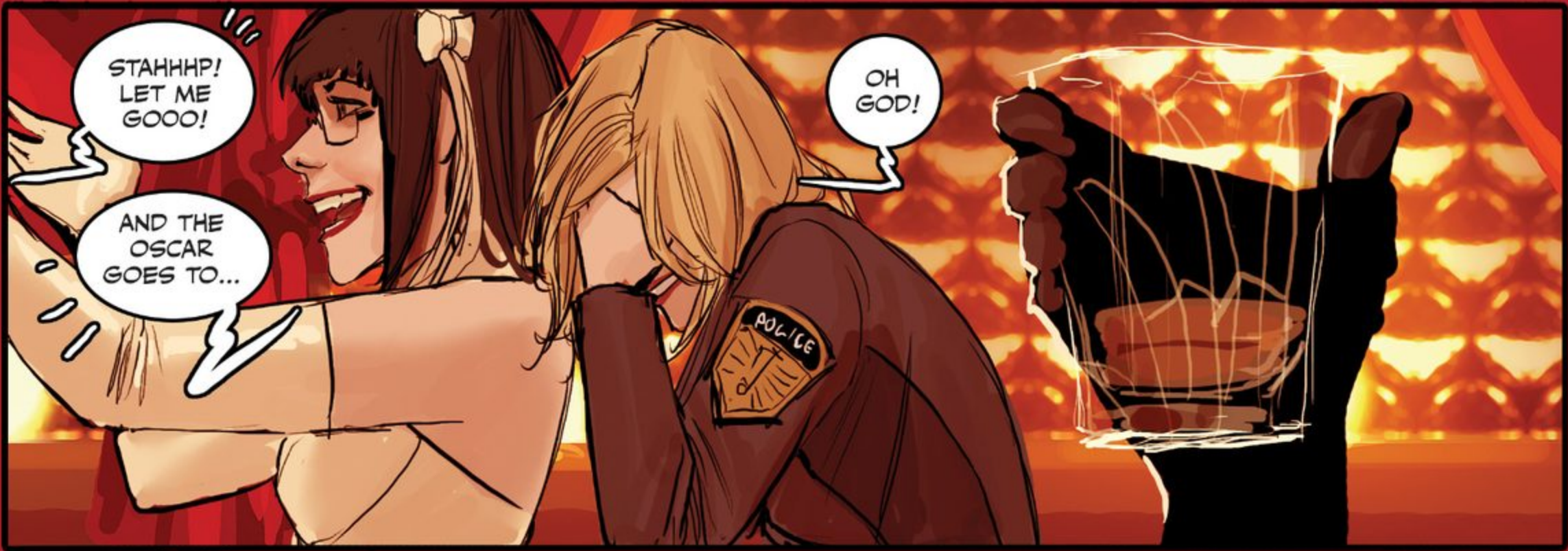
A WHIP! BUT  
OF COURSE! BECAUSE  
VAMPIRES FEAR WHIPS!

YOU'D BE  
SURPRISED!

BUT SOMETHING  
TELLS ME THAT IN AN  
AMAZING TWIST, SHE  
IS ABOUT TO BE  
DISARMED!

OH. BE  
STILL MY  
HEART!





STAHHP!  
LET ME  
GOOO!

AND THE  
OSCAR  
GOES TO...

OH  
GOD!



SELF-DOUBT IS A  
*PERSISTENT* WEED.

YOU CAN TRY AND GET  
RID OF IT, BUT IT HAS  
WAYS OF COMING BACK...



I LOVED ANNE AS  
A FRIEND, BUT WATCHING  
HER HAVE FUN WITH ALLY...  
ONCE AGAIN SELF-DOUBT  
REARED ITS UGLY HEAD.

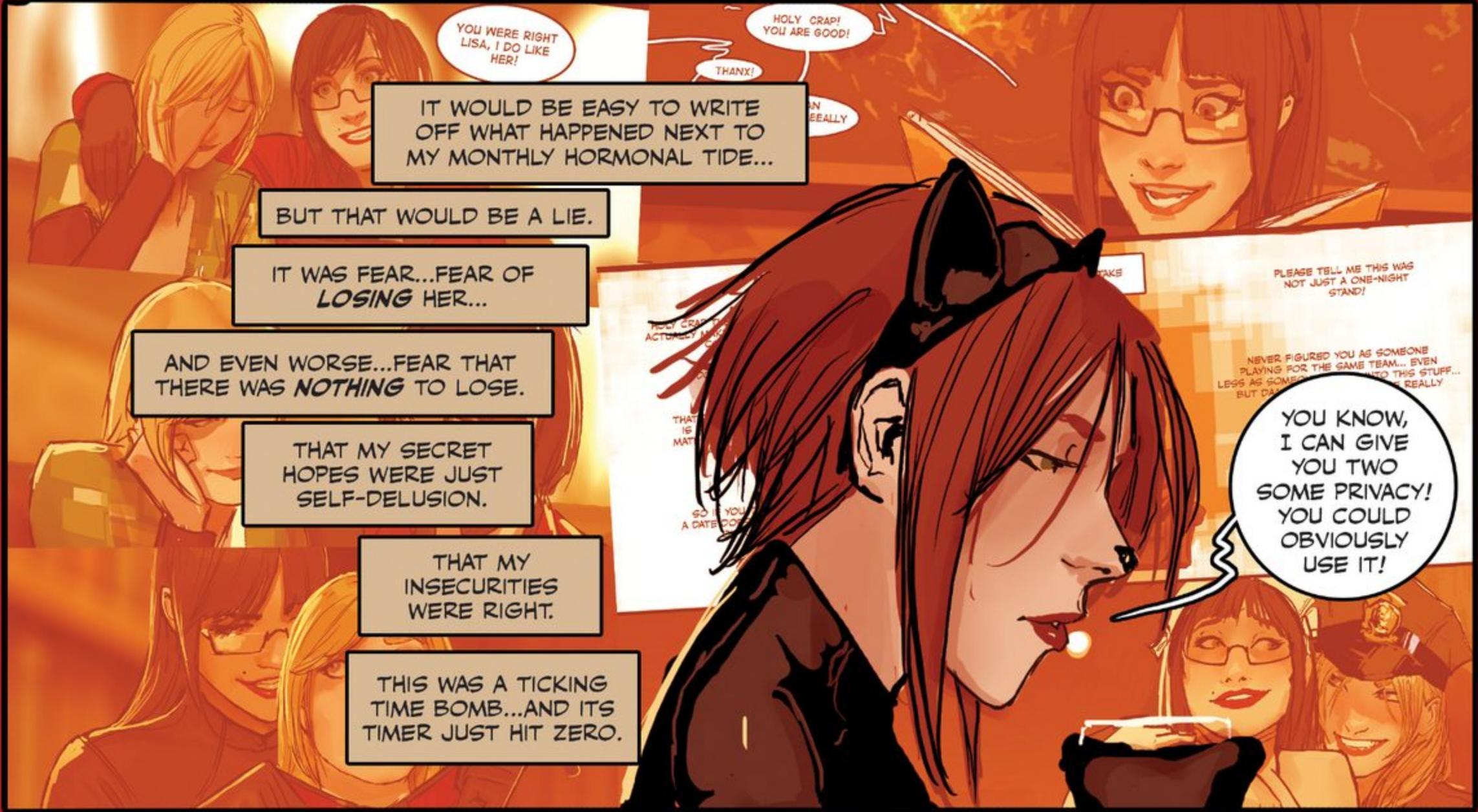


A SEXUALLY SUBMISSIVE,  
BEAUTIFUL, ARTISTICALLY  
CREATIVE AND FUNNY GIRL...

AND NOW SHE WAS A FRIEND  
TO ALLY. SHE RANKED AS  
HIGH AS I DID.

AND WHILE ON ANY GIVEN DAY,  
I WOULD NEVER CALL MYSELF  
JEALOUS, OR POSESSIVE...

THAT NIGHT, I  
WAS *BOTH*.



YOU WERE RIGHT  
LISA, I DO LIKE  
HER!

HOLY CRAP!  
YOU ARE GOOD!

THANK!

AN  
REALLY

IT WOULD BE EASY TO WRITE  
OFF WHAT HAPPENED NEXT TO  
MY MONTHLY HORMONAL TIDE...

BUT THAT WOULD BE A LIE.

IT WAS FEAR...FEAR OF  
*LOSING* HER...

AND EVEN WORSE...FEAR THAT  
THERE WAS *NOTHING* TO LOSE.

THAT MY SECRET  
HOPES WERE JUST  
SELF-DELUSION.

THAT MY  
INSECURITIES  
WERE RIGHT.

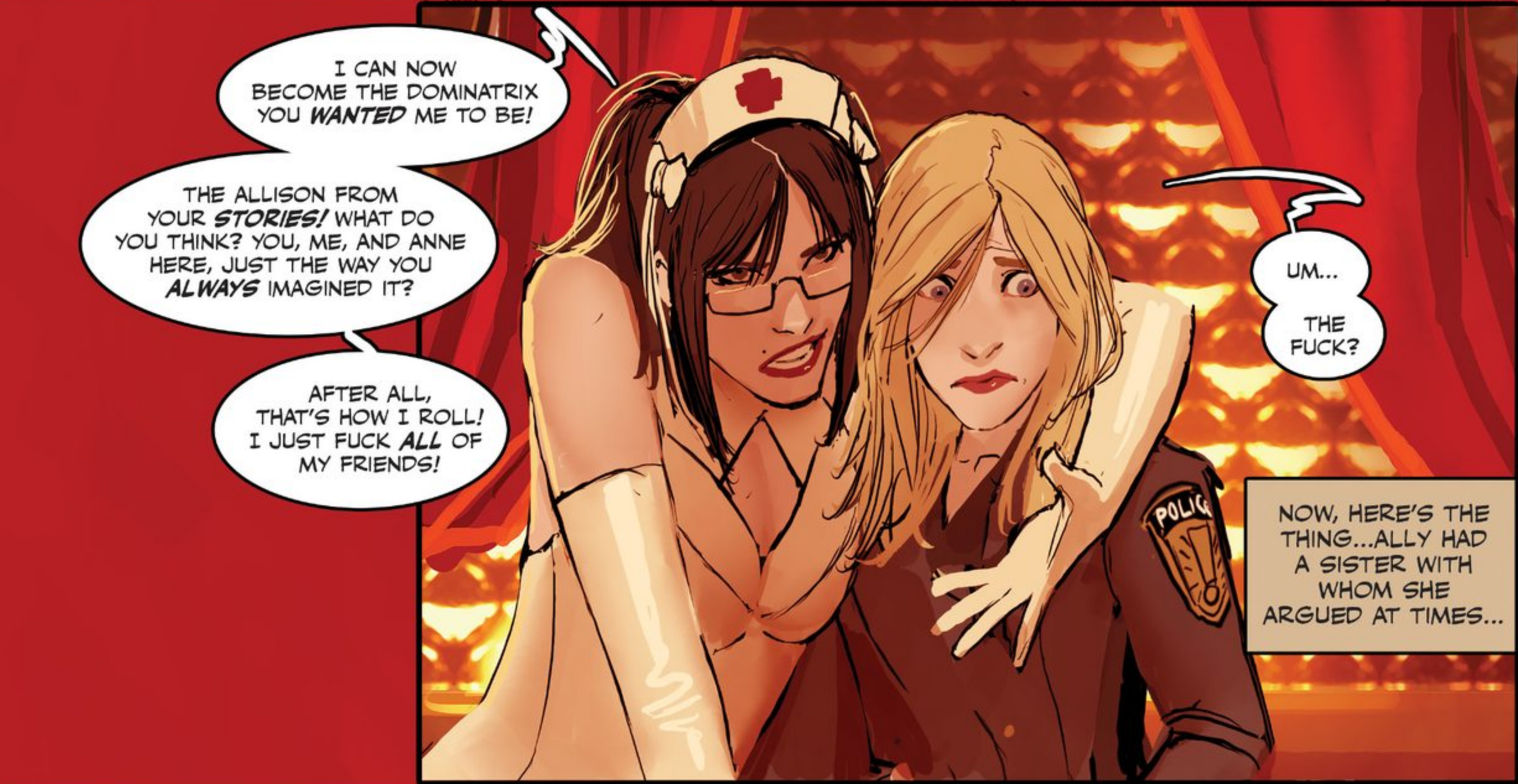
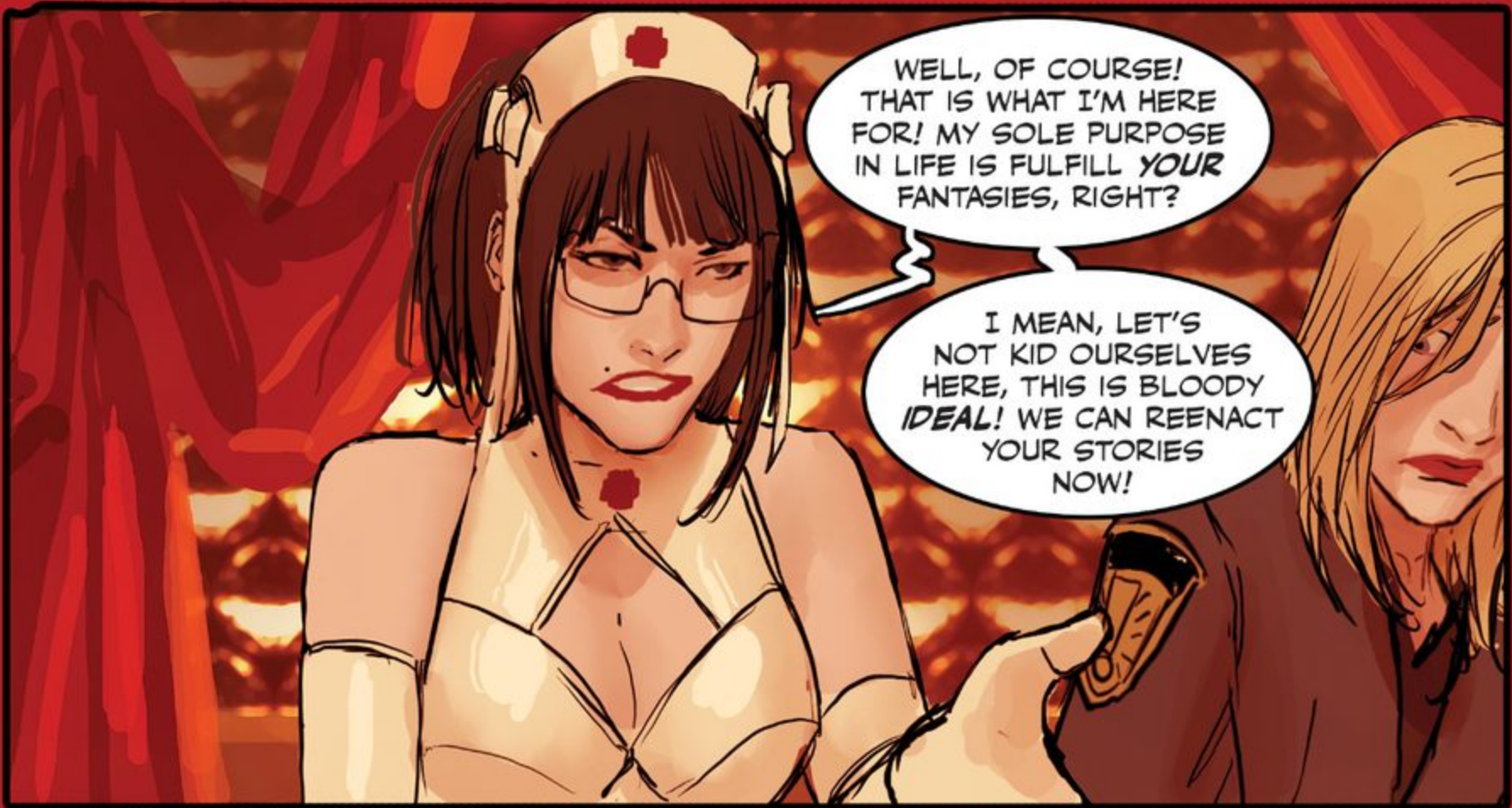
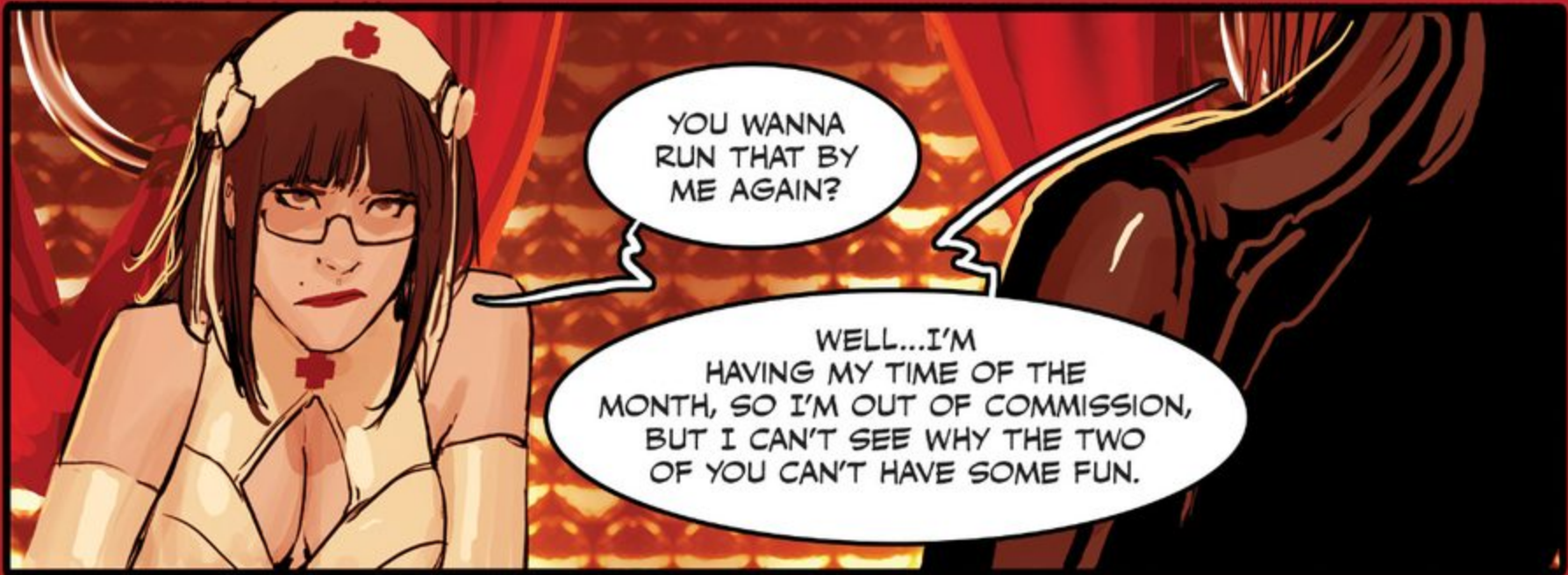
THIS WAS A TICKING  
TIME BOMB...AND ITS  
TIMER JUST HIT ZERO.

PLEASE TELL ME THIS WAS  
NOT JUST A ONE-NIGHT  
STAND!

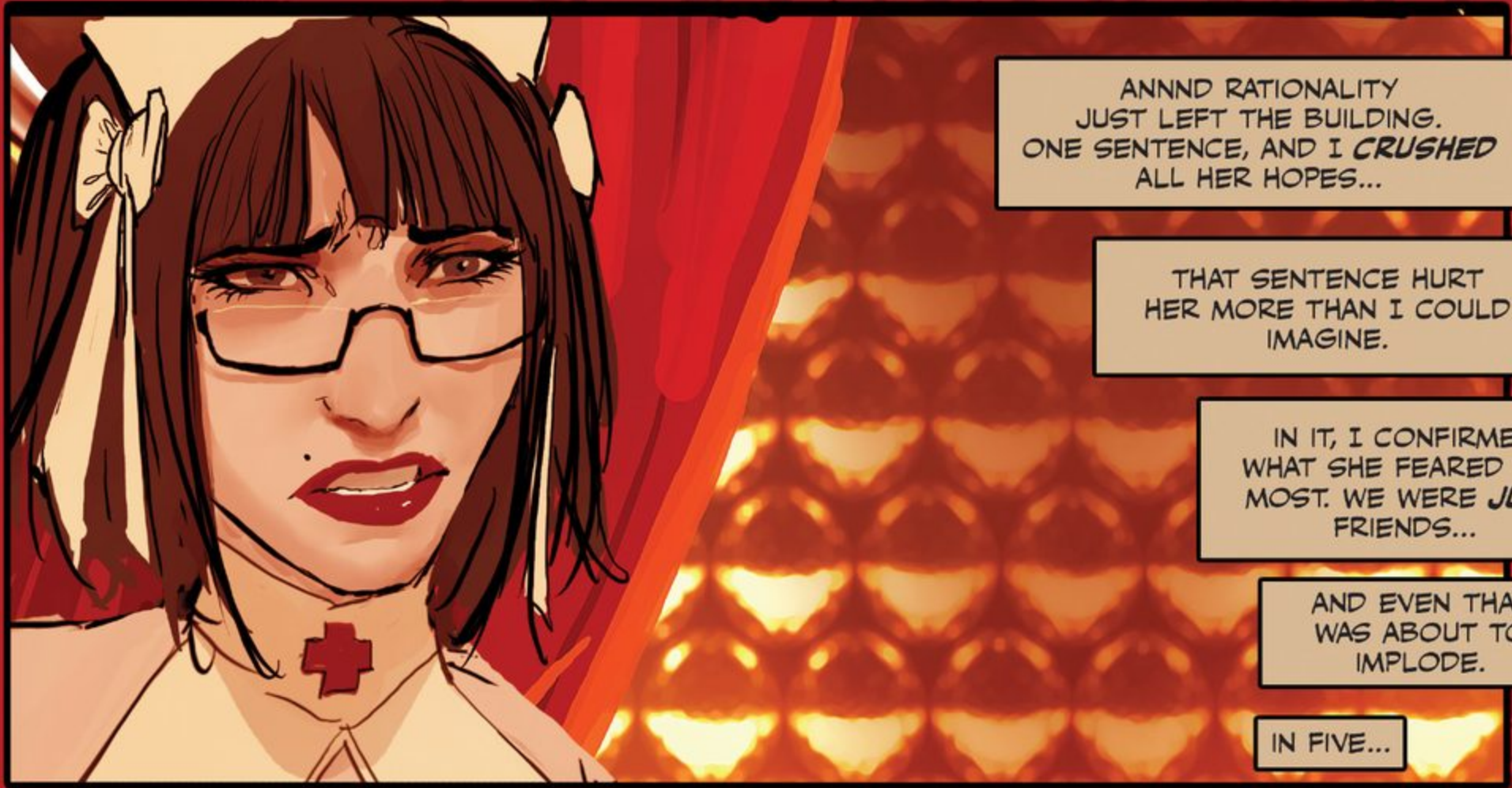
NEVER FIGURED YOU AS SOMEONE  
PLAYING FOR THE SAME TEAM... EVEN  
LESS AS SOMEONE WHO'D THIS STUFF...  
BUT DAMN... REALLY

YOU KNOW,  
I CAN GIVE  
YOU TWO  
SOME PRIVACY!  
YOU COULD  
OBVIOUSLY  
USE IT!









ANNND RATIONALITY  
JUST LEFT THE BUILDING.  
ONE SENTENCE, AND I **CRUSHED**  
ALL HER HOPES...

THAT SENTENCE HURT  
HER MORE THAN I COULD  
IMAGINE.

IN IT, I CONFIRMED  
WHAT SHE FEARED THE  
MOST. WE WERE **JUST**  
FRIENDS...

AND EVEN THAT  
WAS ABOUT TO  
IMPLODE.

IN FIVE...



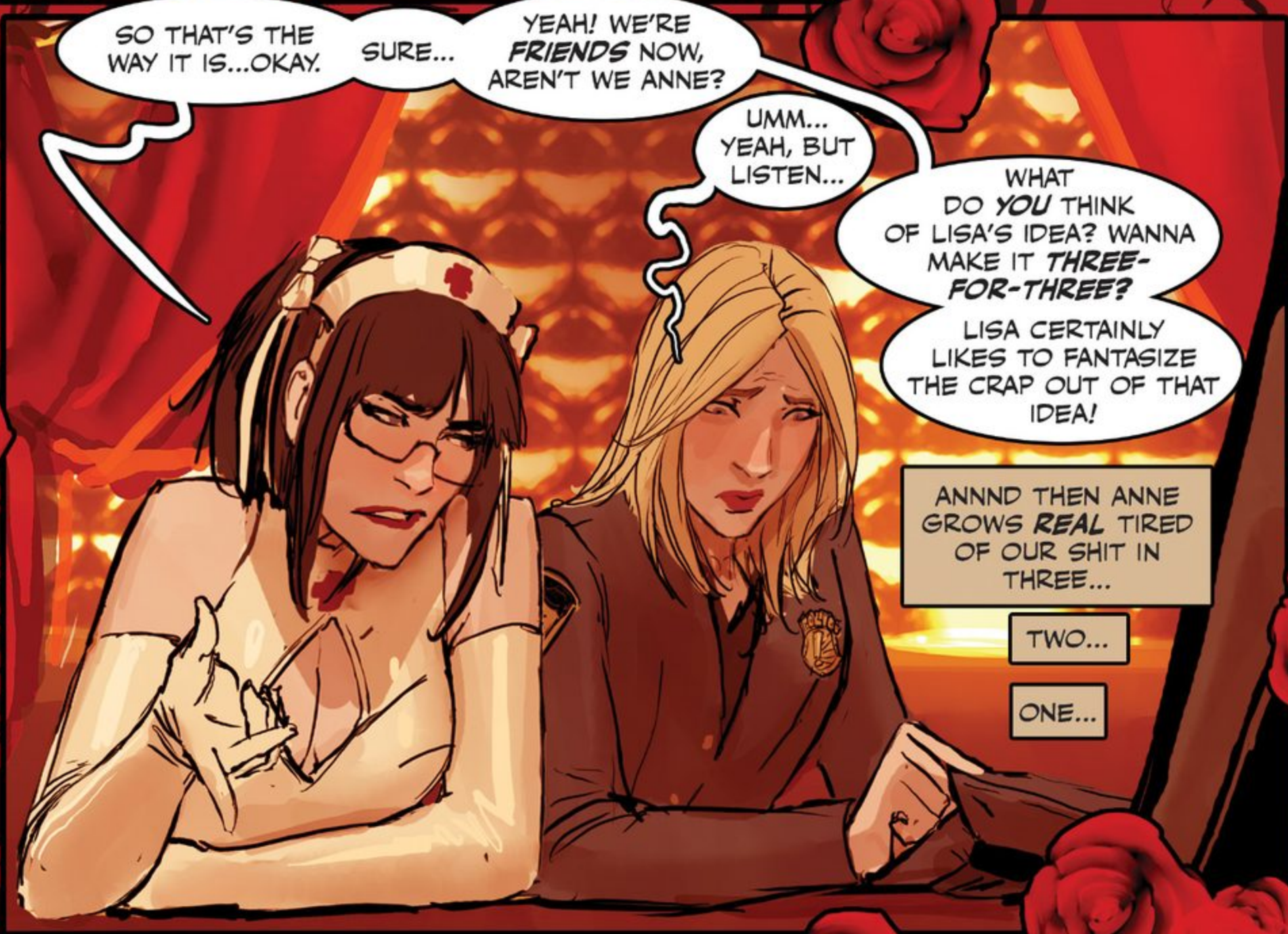
FOUR...

THREE...

TWO...



ONE...



SO THAT'S THE  
WAY IT IS...OKAY. SURE...

YEAH! WE'RE  
**FRIENDS** NOW,  
AREN'T WE ANNE?

UMM...  
YEAH, BUT  
LISTEN...

WHAT  
DO **YOU** THINK  
OF LISA'S IDEA? WANNA  
MAKE IT **THREE-  
FOR-THREE?**

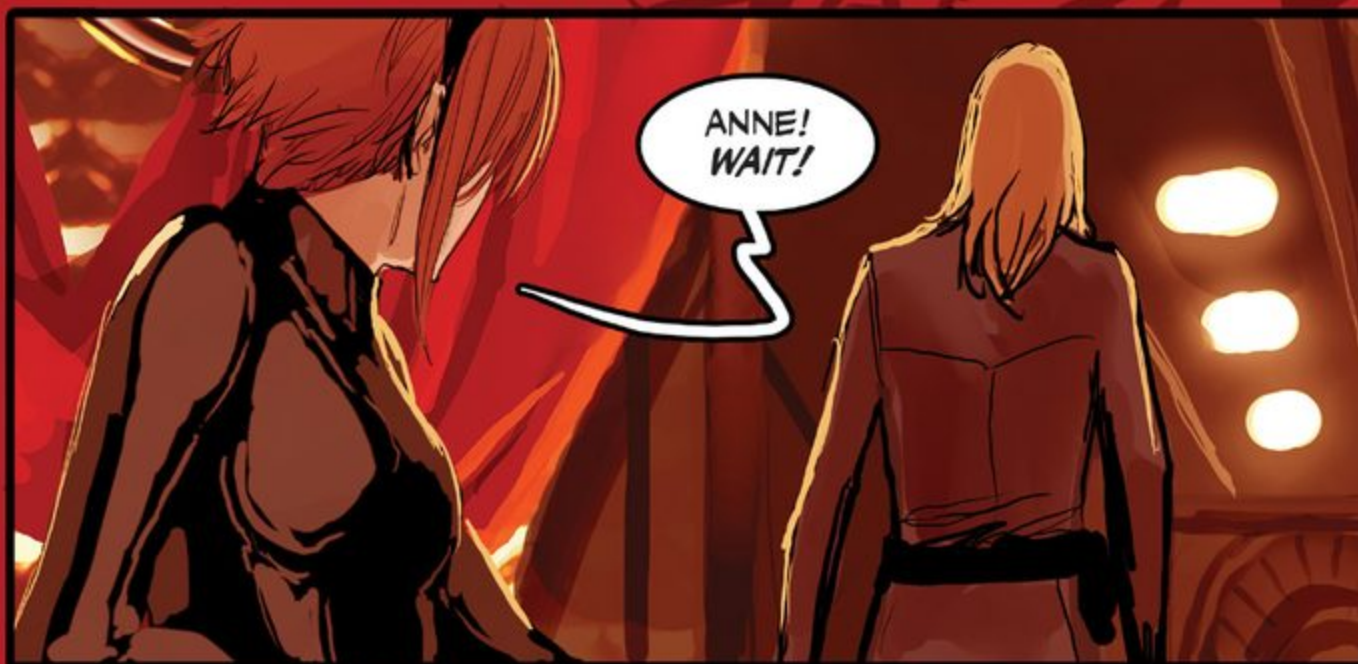
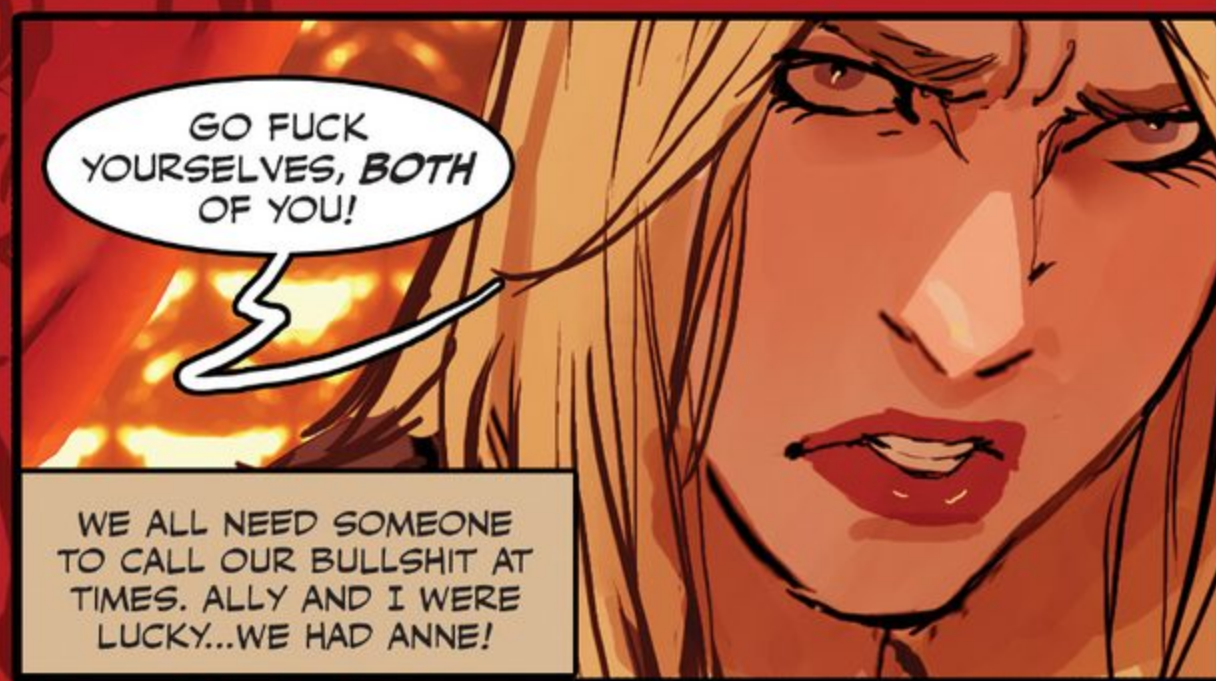
LISA CERTAINLY  
LIKES TO FANTASIZE  
THE CRAP OUT OF THAT  
IDEA!

ANNND THEN ANNE  
GROWS **REAL** TIRED  
OF OUR SHIT IN  
THREE...

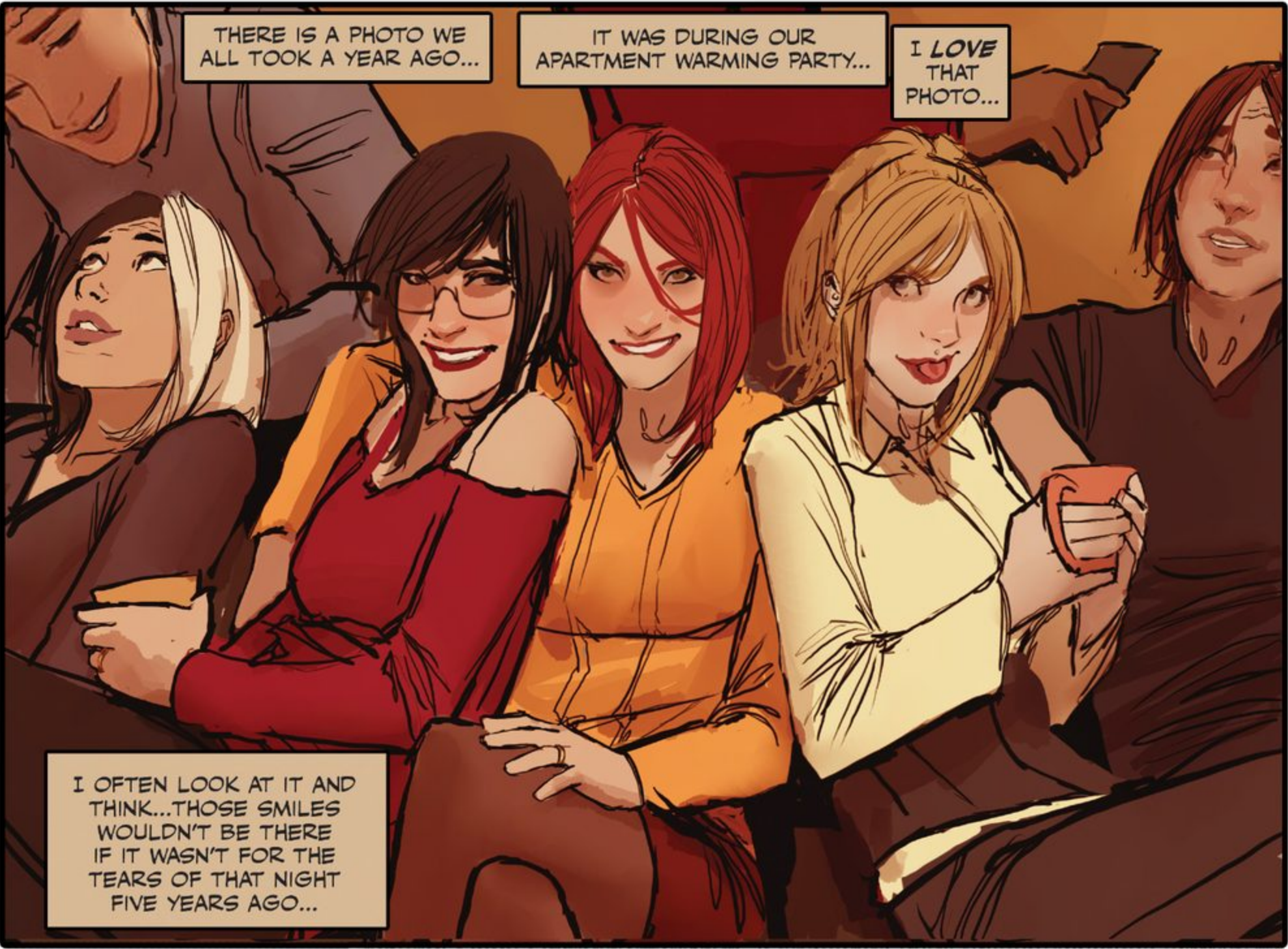
TWO...

ONE...









THERE IS A PHOTO WE ALL TOOK A YEAR AGO...

IT WAS DURING OUR APARTMENT WARMING PARTY...

I LOVE THAT PHOTO...

I OFTEN LOOK AT IT AND THINK...THOSE SMILES WOULDN'T BE THERE IF IT WASN'T FOR THE TEARS OF THAT NIGHT FIVE YEARS AGO...



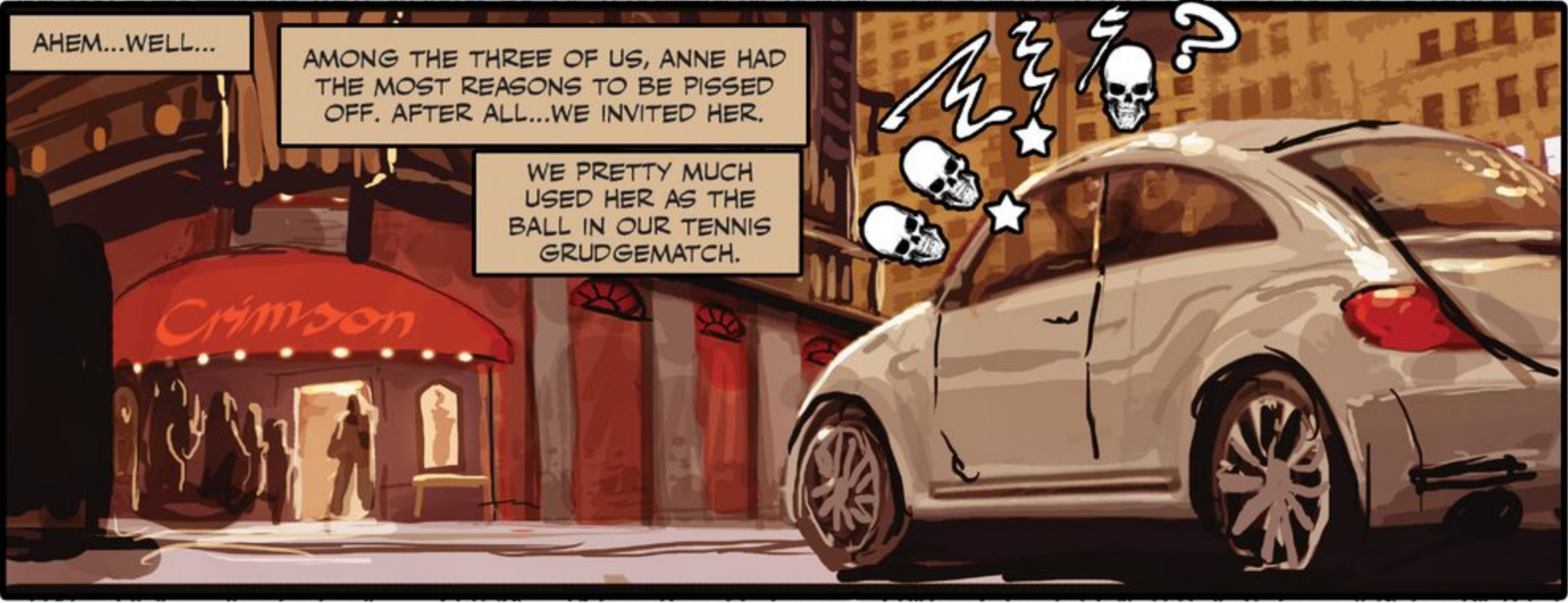
IF IT WASN'T FOR THAT PAIN...



THAT SORROW...



THAT...



AHEM...WELL...

AMONG THE THREE OF US, ANNE HAD THE MOST REASONS TO BE PISSED OFF. AFTER ALL...WE INVITED HER.

WE PRETTY MUCH USED HER AS THE BALL IN OUR TENNIS GRUDGE MATCH.

TRUTH IS, SHE HAD EVERY RIGHT TO HATE US...

AND EVEN MORE TO FEEL HURT.



OH!



FUCK!





SORRY, WE'RE FULL, BUT AS SOON AS MORE LEAVE I...

COME OON!



EXCUSE ME...UM, I LEFT MY CAP INSIDE AND, WELL, I ACTUALLY *RENTED* THIS COSTUME...  
I MEAN, I'M NOT TRYING TO *SCAM* YOU! I *WAS* ACTUALLY INSIDE.



I KNOW.  
I REMEMBER YOU!



OH!?



UM, WAIT, SO YOU, LIKE, REMEMBER *EVERYONE*?



OH NO... BUT AMONG THE TWENTY OR SO SKIMPY POLICEGIRL OUTFITS I SAW TONIGHT, *YOURS* STANDS OUT.



OH...I SEE.  
SO, UH... CAN I?



YEAH, GO ON!

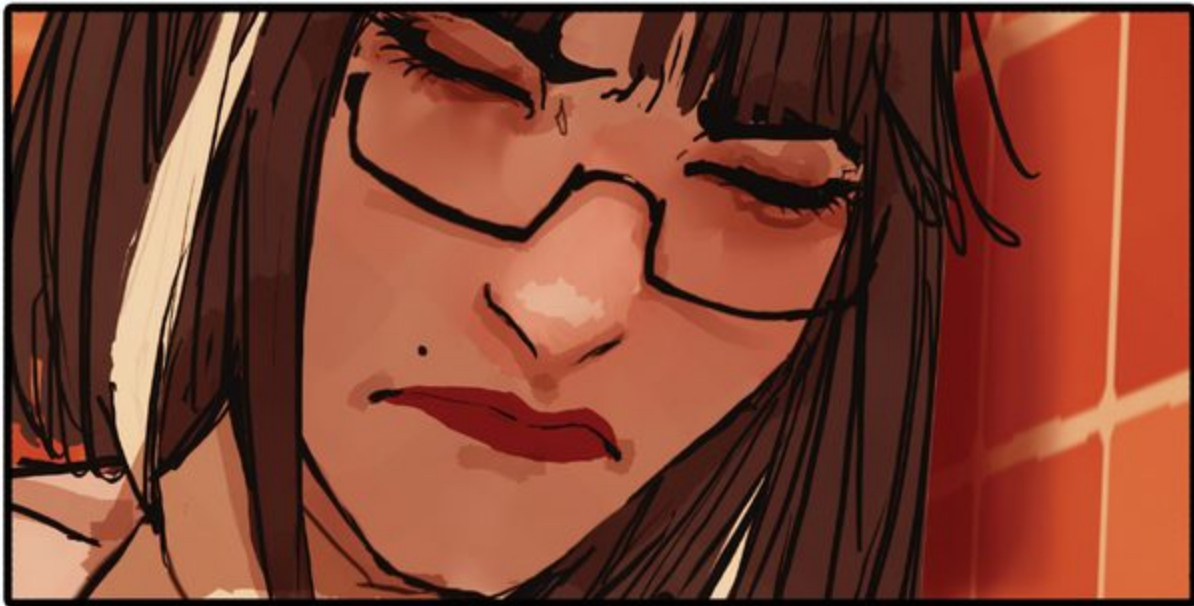
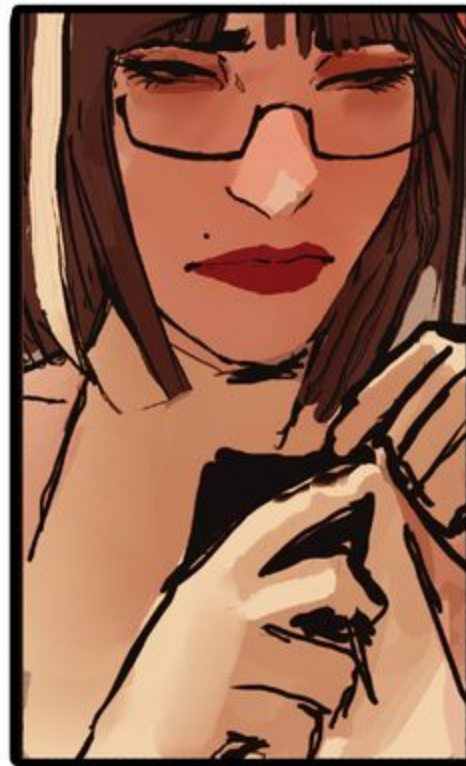
HEEY!!!

THANKS! I'M JUST GONNA GET MY CAP!



AND DROP A FEW F-BOMBS!









OKAY,  
STORYTIME!

WHEN I WAS A KID, MY BROTHER MIKE STARTED GOING TO TAEKWONDO...OF COURSE, BEING A CLINGY LITTLE SISTER, I WANTED TO GO AS WELL.

NOW, ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS I LEARNED THERE WAS...



WITH YOUR WRIST BENT LIKE THAT, LANDING A PUNCH WILL RESULT IN A LIKELY INJURY.

YOUR FIST NEEDS TO BE ALIGNED WITH YOUR ARM, OR WHEN YOU LAND A PUNCH, FORCE WILL END UP TEARING YOUR LIGAMENTS OR EVEN BREAKING A BONE.

SO, LOCK YOUR WRIST!



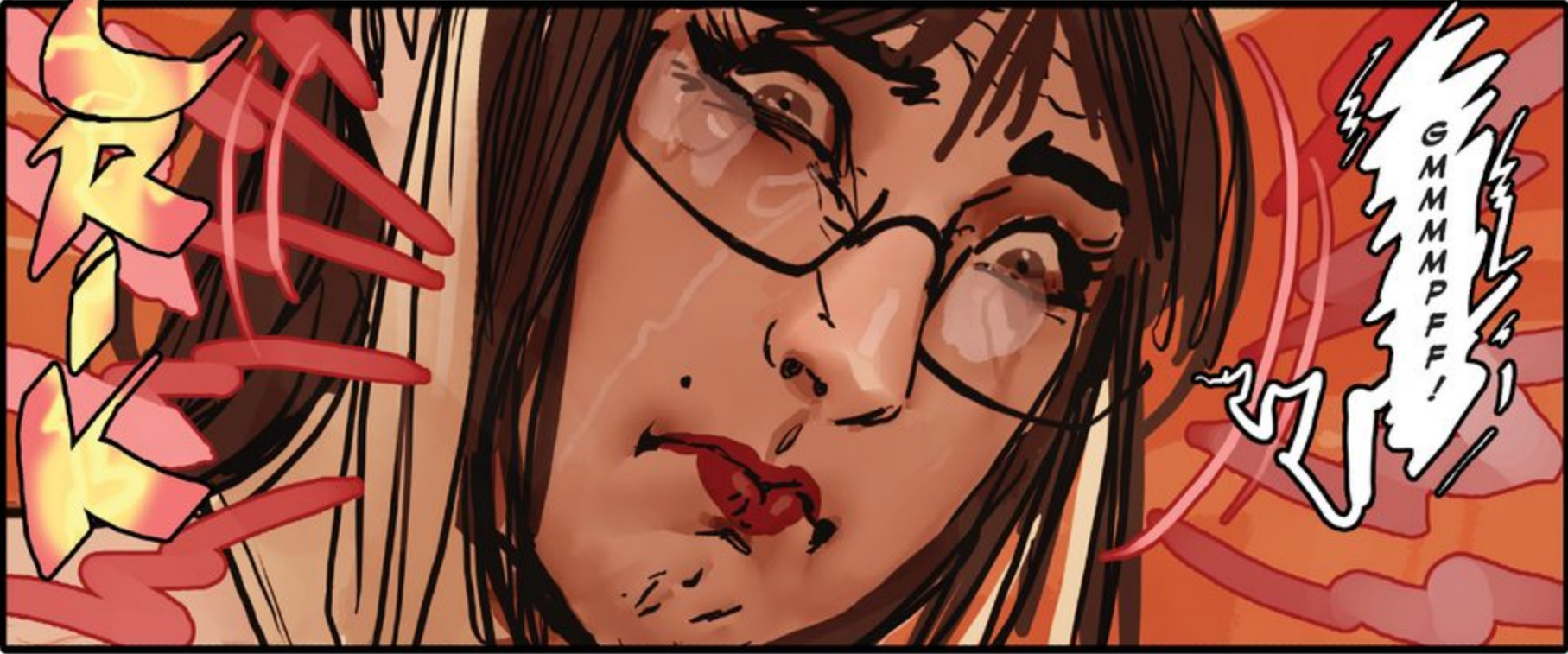
LIKE THIS?

EXCELLENT!

WHAP



SO, ALLY DIDN'T KNOW THAT, AND...



ANYHOO...WHILE ALLY WAS TRYING HER HARDEST TO SUPPRESS A SCREAM, I WAS JUST ARRIVING HOME, COURTESY OF CASSIE AND TOM...WHO TO MY GREAT SURPRISE ASKED VERY FEW QUESTIONS.

ACCORDING TO CASSIE, I HAD A HUGE "DON'T FUCKING ASK" EXPRESSION ON MY FACE...





LISA, UM...  
CALL ME, OKAY?  
I MEAN, WHEN YOU  
WANT TO.

WILL DO.  
THANKS FOR THE  
RIDE, YOU TWO.

DON'T  
MENTION  
IT!



I WOULD LOVE TO SAY  
THAT I HANDLED ALL THIS  
WITH QUIET DIGNITY...

BUT THAT WOULD  
BE A LIE.



I SAT IN THE LIVING ROOM FOR TWO  
HOURS WAITING FOR HER...NOT  
KNOWING WHAT I WOULD SAY ONCE SHE  
ARRIVED...I WAS WALLOWING IN BOTH  
SELF PITY AND SELF LOATHING, AND  
SHE WAS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN.  
NO CALLS, NO NOTHING...

I WAS PISSED OFF...  
AT HER, AT MYSELF.



I CONSIDERED  
CALLING HER...

AFTER ALL,  
THAT'S HOW I ROLL!  
I JUST FUCK **ALL** OF  
MY FRIENDS!

GAVE UP ON  
THAT NOTION...



IN THE END, I DID THE  
ONLY THING THAT MADE  
ANY SENSE  
AT THE MOMENT.



HEY, I NEED  
A FAVOR!

I DON'T CARE  
WHAT THE TIME IS,  
YOU **OWE** ME!

IN MY MIND, ALLY WASN'T  
THERE BECAUSE SHE  
WAS PARTYING. ALLY DIDN'T  
CARE. THAT ALLY MADE IT  
EASIER FOR ME TO FEEL  
ENOUGH SELF PITY, TO  
DROWN OUT MY OWN  
SELF LOATHING. I **HAD** TO  
BLAME HER! WOW...  
I FEEL LIKE SHIT JUST  
WRITING THIS! BUT THIS IS  
IMPORTANT! YOU MUST  
KNOW THIS, AS IT WILL  
COME BACK LATER.





NO...ALLY WASN'T  
PARTYING...



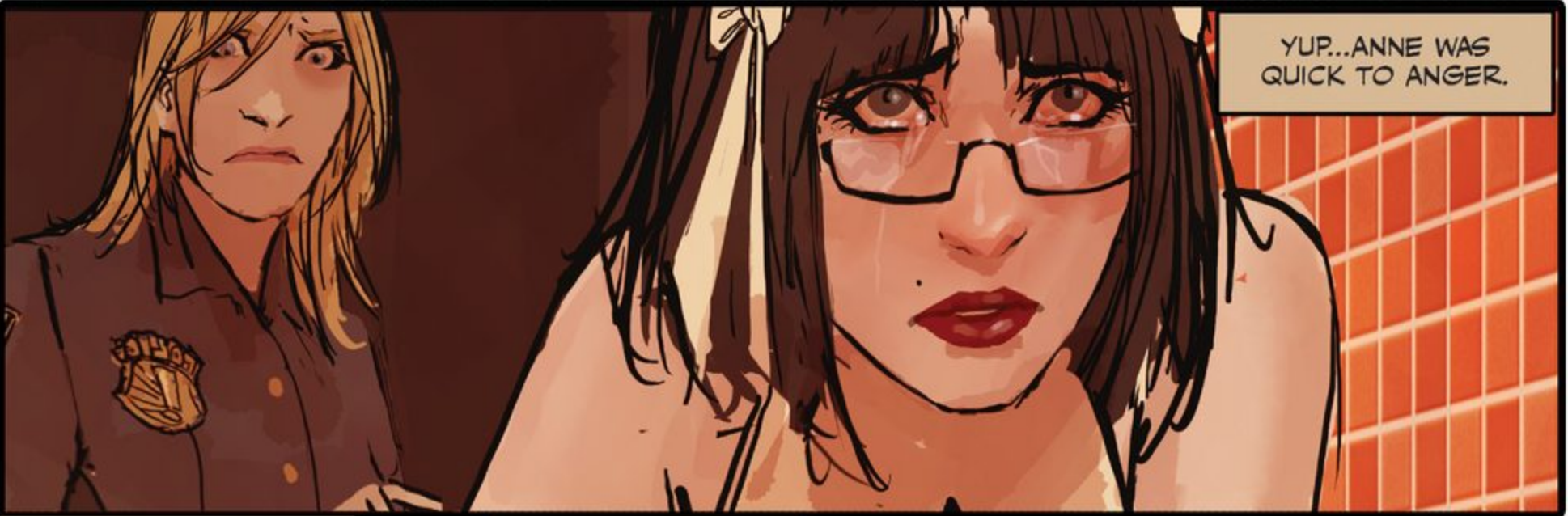
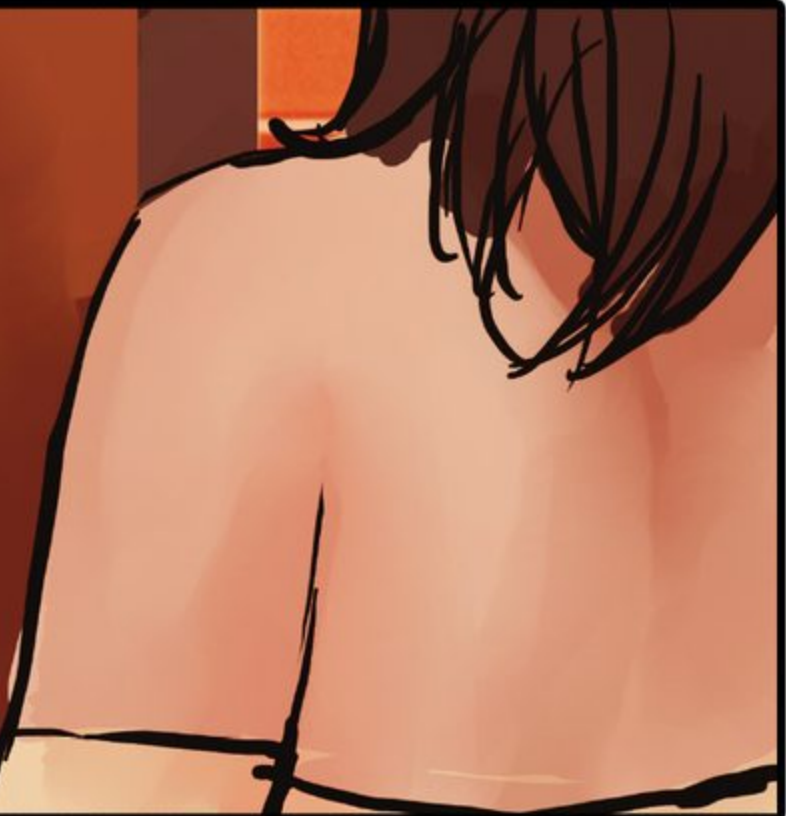
THAT'S  
ALLISON'S COAT...  
SO WHERE THE HELL  
ARE THEY?



AH, YES!  
ELEMENTARY!  
THE TOILET!



THEEEERE  
YOU...



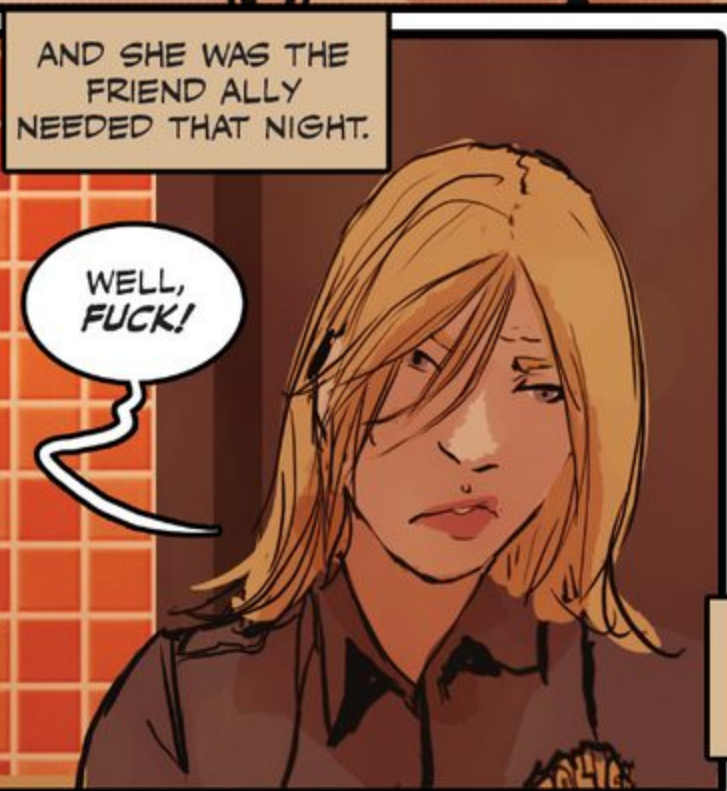
YUP...ANNE WAS  
QUICK TO ANGER.



BUT THE TRUTH WAS,  
IN HER HEART...



SHE WAS A BIG  
SOFTIE...

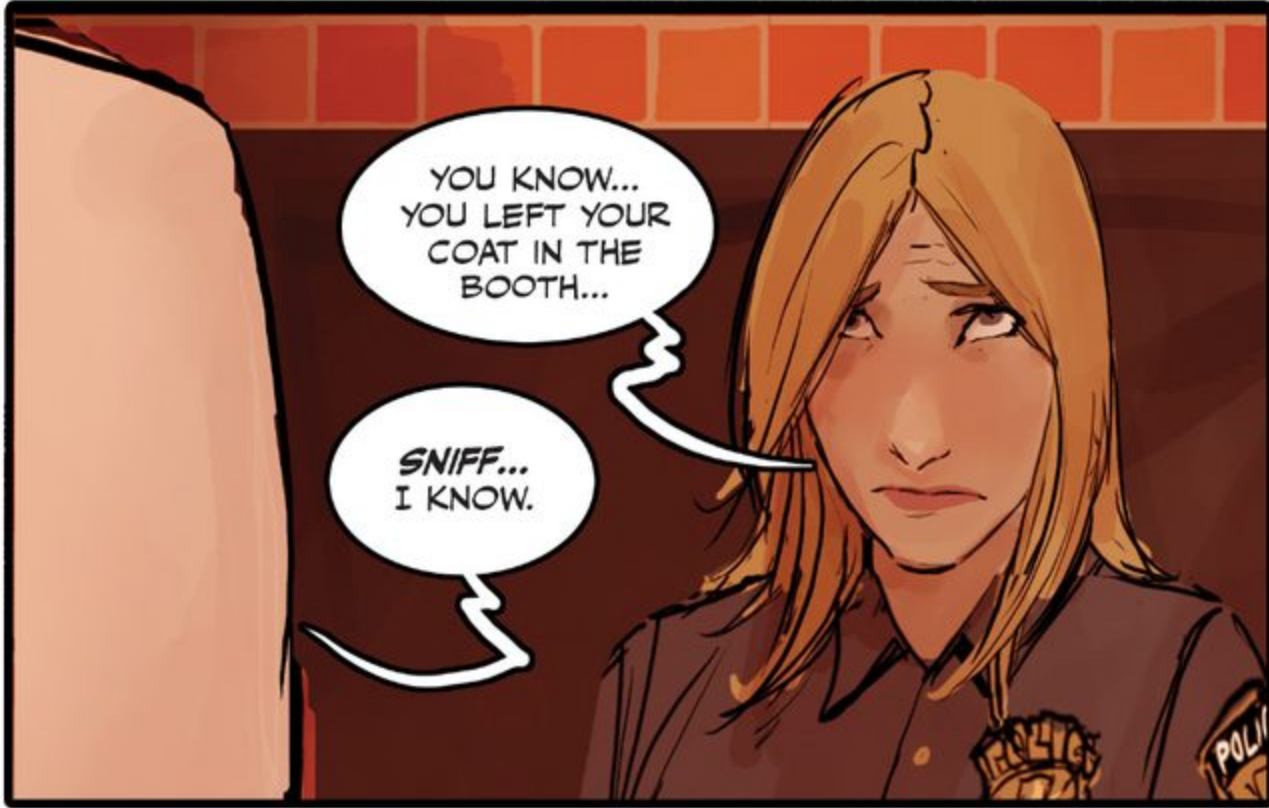


AND SHE WAS THE  
FRIEND ALLY  
NEEDED THAT NIGHT.

WELL,  
FUCK!

HEY! SHE DID  
DROP *ONE*  
F-BOMB.









SNIFF...  
I AM SO, SO, SO  
SORRY, ANNE!  
SOB!



IT'S OKAY...  
APOLOGY  
ACCEPTED.



BUT THIS LEAVES  
ME WITH A PROBLEM...  
I WAS ALL GOOD AND PISSED  
AND I LOADED UP ON SO  
MANY F-BOMBS...



NOW WHERE  
AM I GONNA UNLOAD  
THOSE?

GHK-HAAHAHA  
SNIFF---GAHAK!



OH, ALLY  
DID I EVER TELL YOU,  
YOU HAVE THE **WORST**  
LAUGH I HAVE EVER  
HEARD?

BWAHAH-SOB-  
GAHAH...  
YOU  
REALLY ARE A  
SWEET-TALKER!

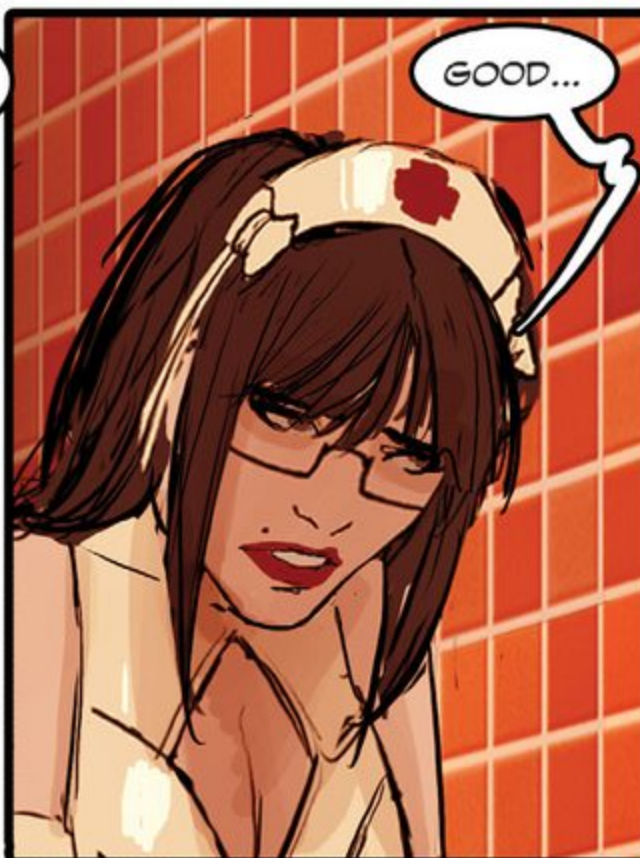


OF COURSE! HUH?



OH -- CASSIE SAYS  
SHE AND TOM TOOK  
LISA HOME.

OH...



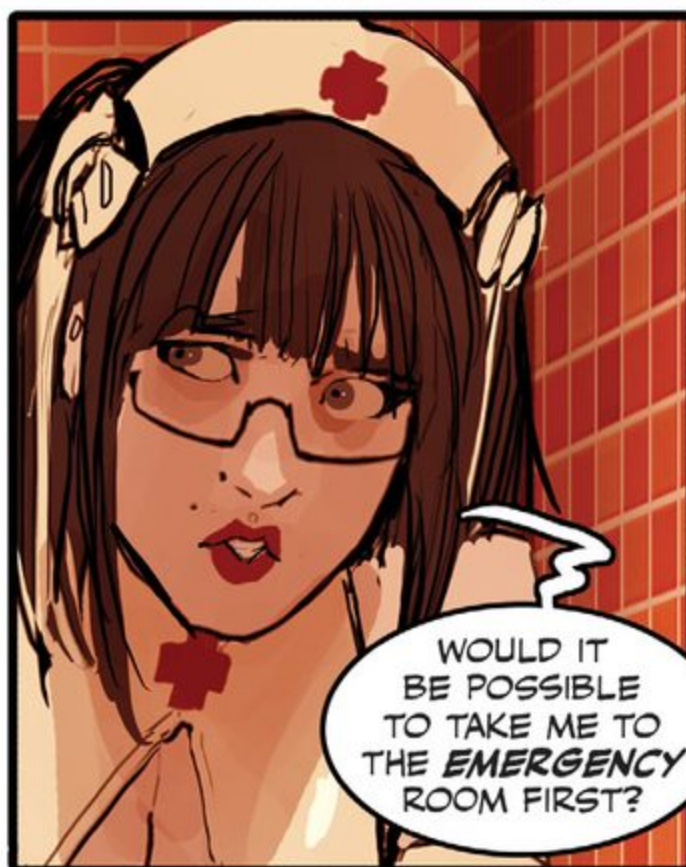
GOOD...



COME ON, YOU  
SILLY DOMINATRIX!  
I'LL TAKE YOU HOME,  
AND YOU CAN FIX WHAT  
IS BROKEN!



UM...YEAH  
ABOUT THAT...



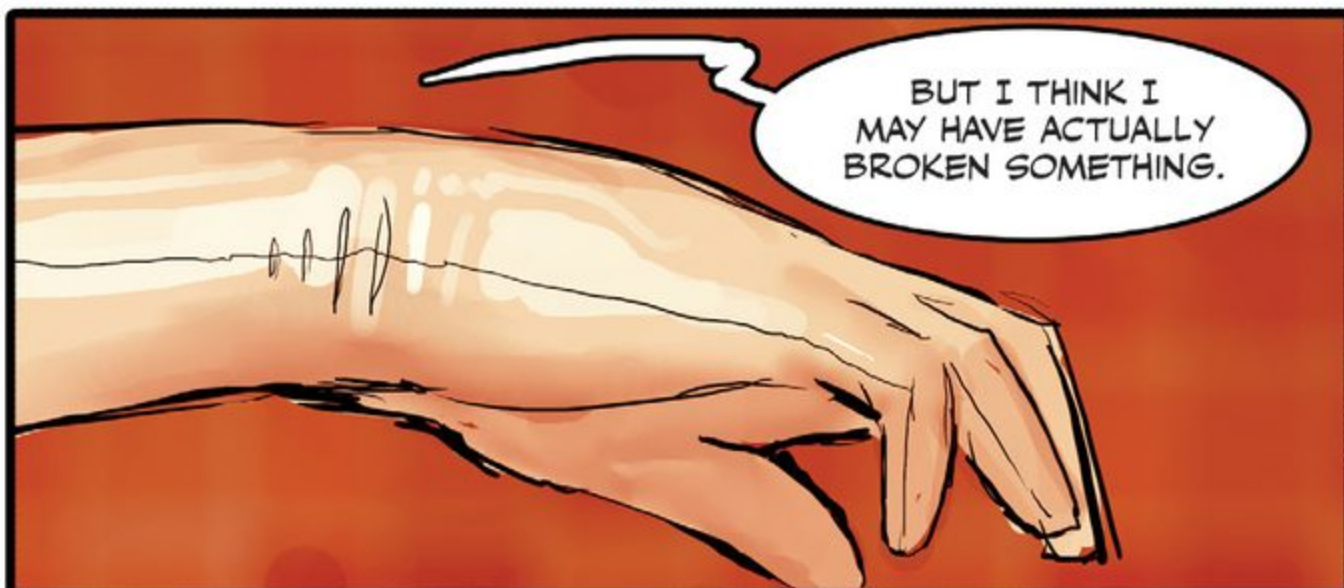
WOULD IT  
BE POSSIBLE  
TO TAKE ME TO  
THE **EMERGENCY**  
ROOM FIRST?



HUH?  
WHY!?



WELL...UM...  
I WAS KINDA WAITING HERE  
TO SEE IF THE PAIN WOULD  
GO AWAY...

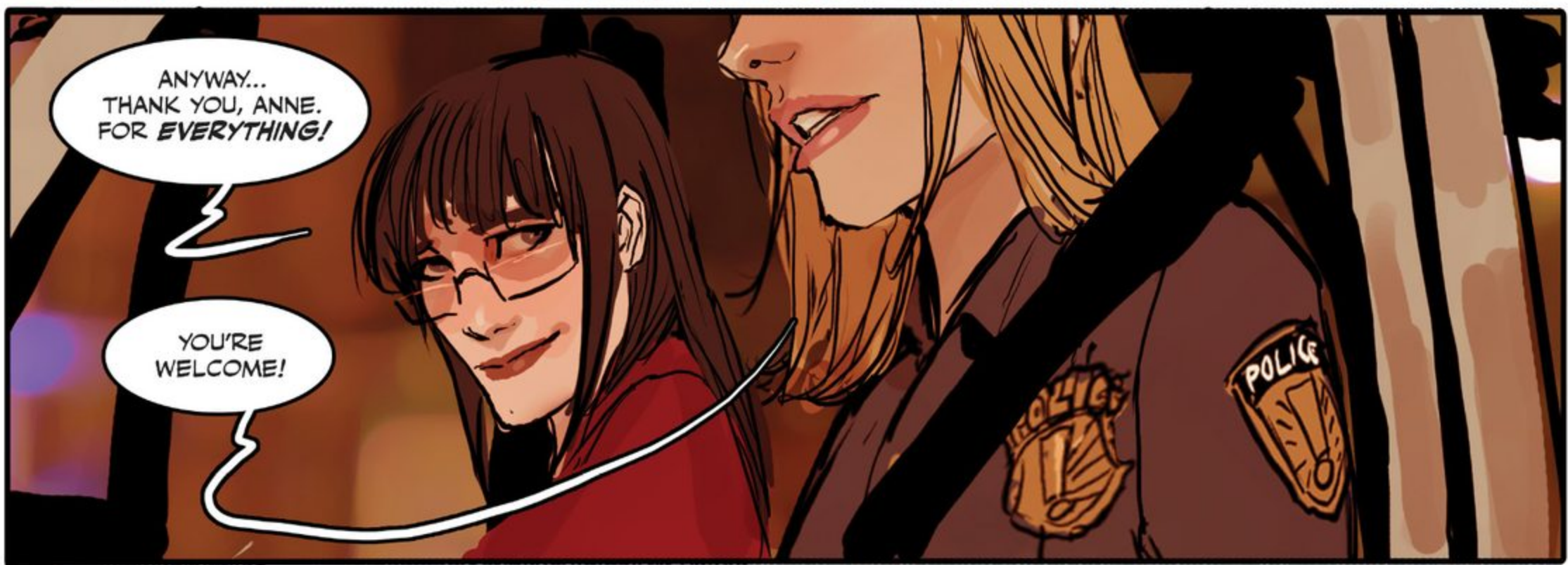
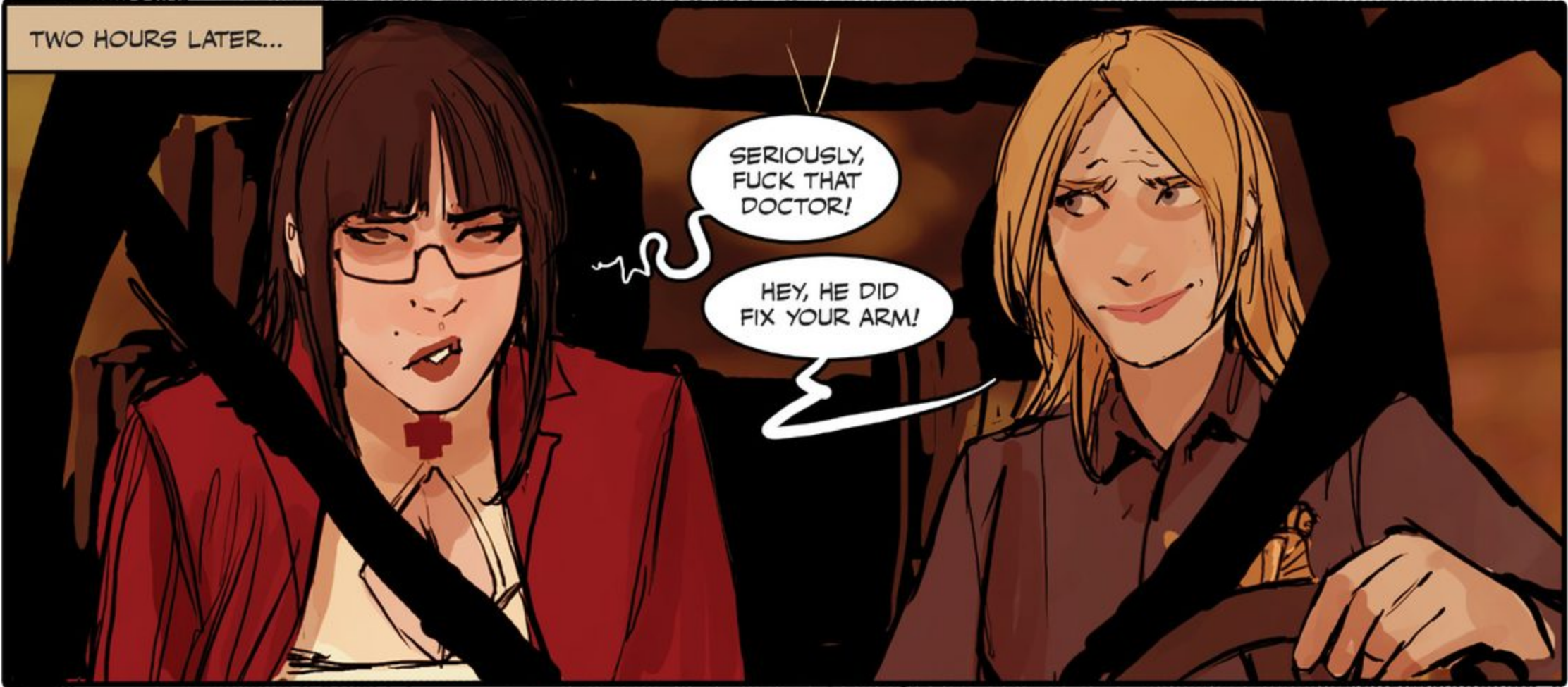


BUT I THINK I  
MAY HAVE ACTUALLY  
BROKEN SOMETHING.

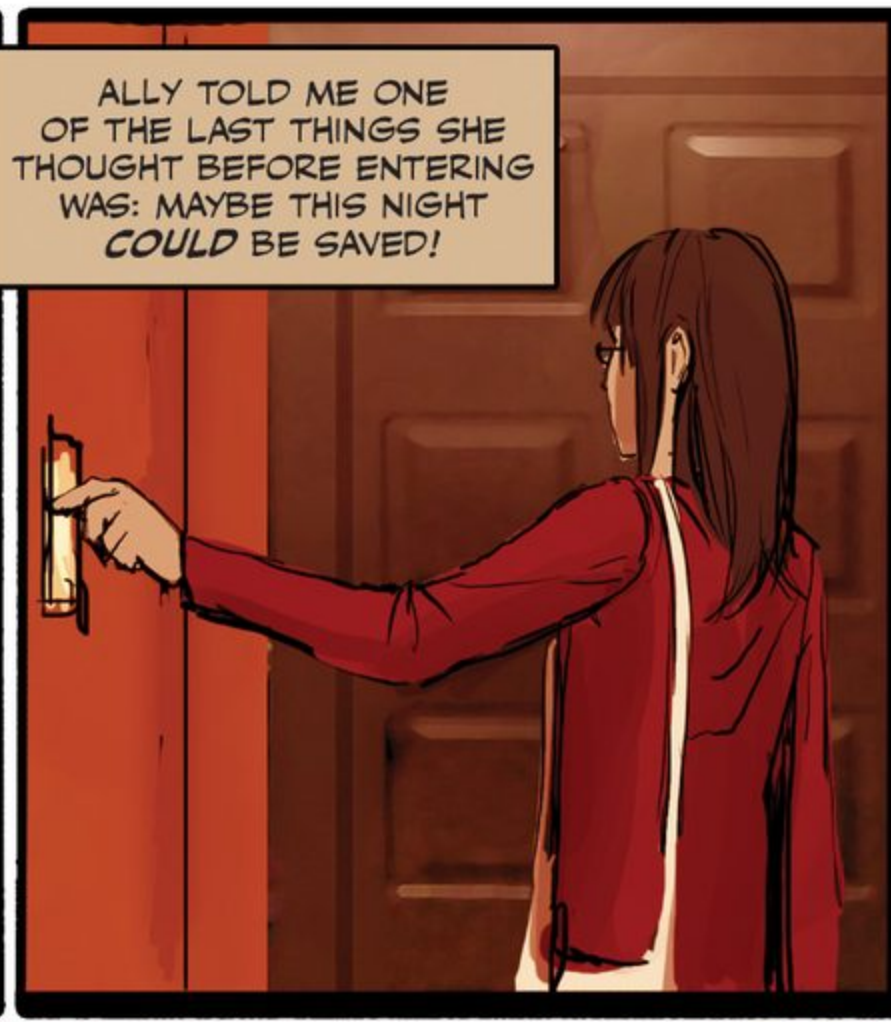
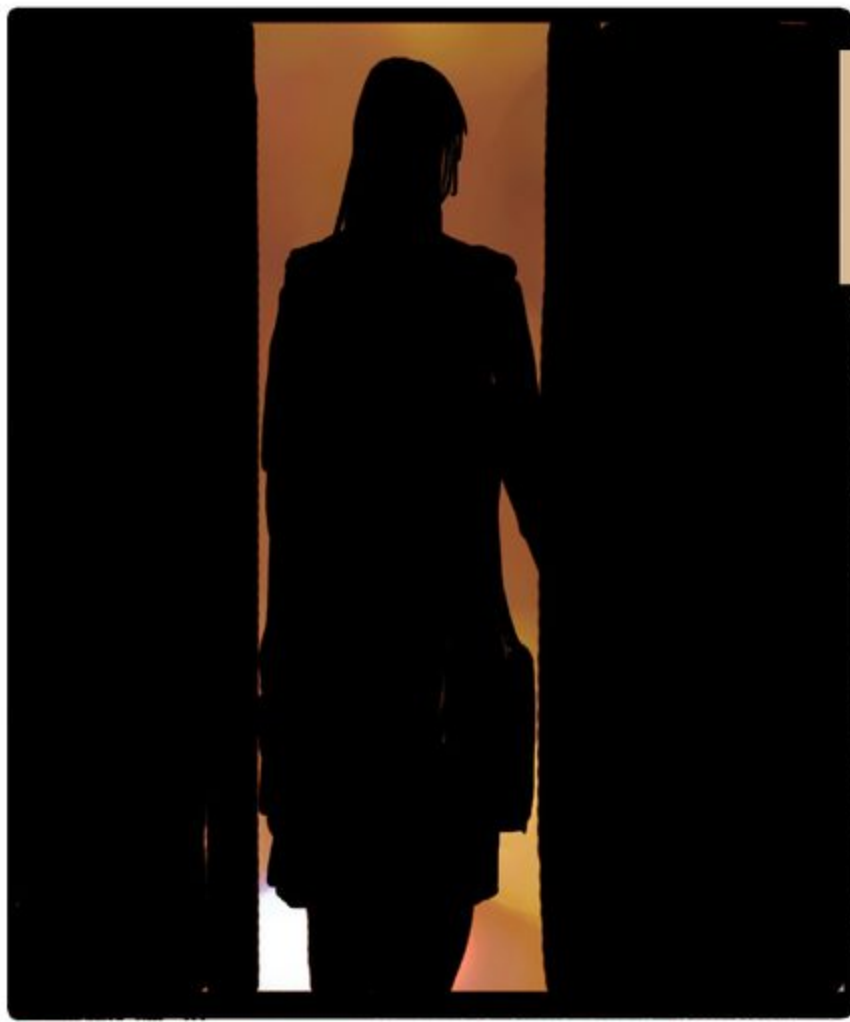


THE  
FUCK!?









ALLY TOLD ME ONE OF THE LAST THINGS SHE THOUGHT BEFORE ENTERING WAS: MAYBE THIS NIGHT COULD BE SAVED!



MAYBE IT COULD HAVE. I OFTEN WONDER WHAT WOULD HAVE CHANGED.



BUT...AS SAD AS WRITING ABOUT THIS MAKES ME...

I HAVE NO REGRETS.

I'm gonna spend some time with my parents. I think we both need some time to think.



BECAUSE, AS I SAID, WITHOUT THE TEARS, AND THE PAIN OF THAT NIGHT...





WITHOUT THE  
FEELING OF LOSS...



SNIFF...

THERE WOULD  
BE NO SMILES  
LATER ON...

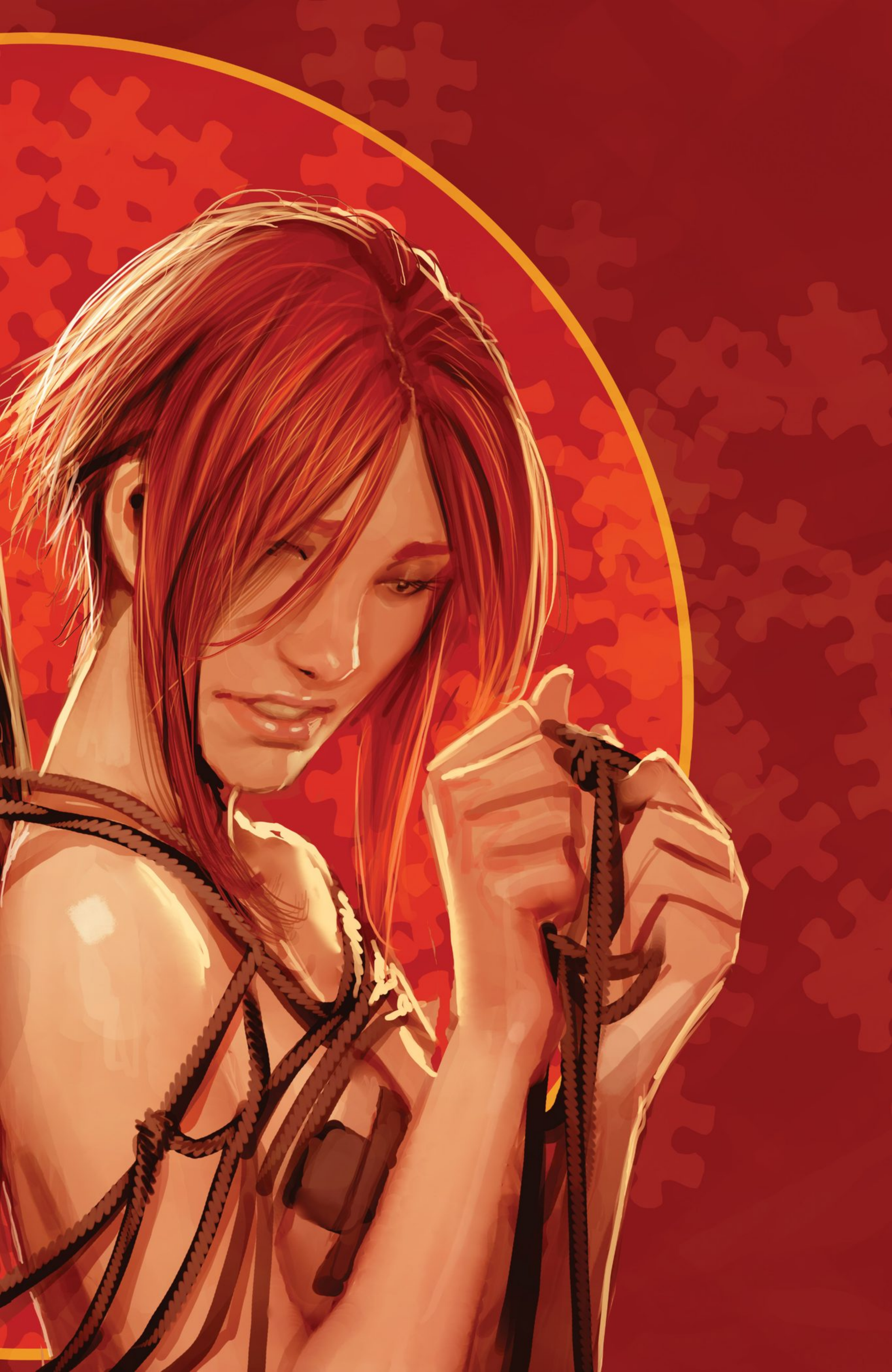


GHK!

THIS WAS OUR  
**LOW** POINT...

BUT LUCKILY, THINGS  
**DO** GET BETTER. THEY  
GET...**AMAZING!**







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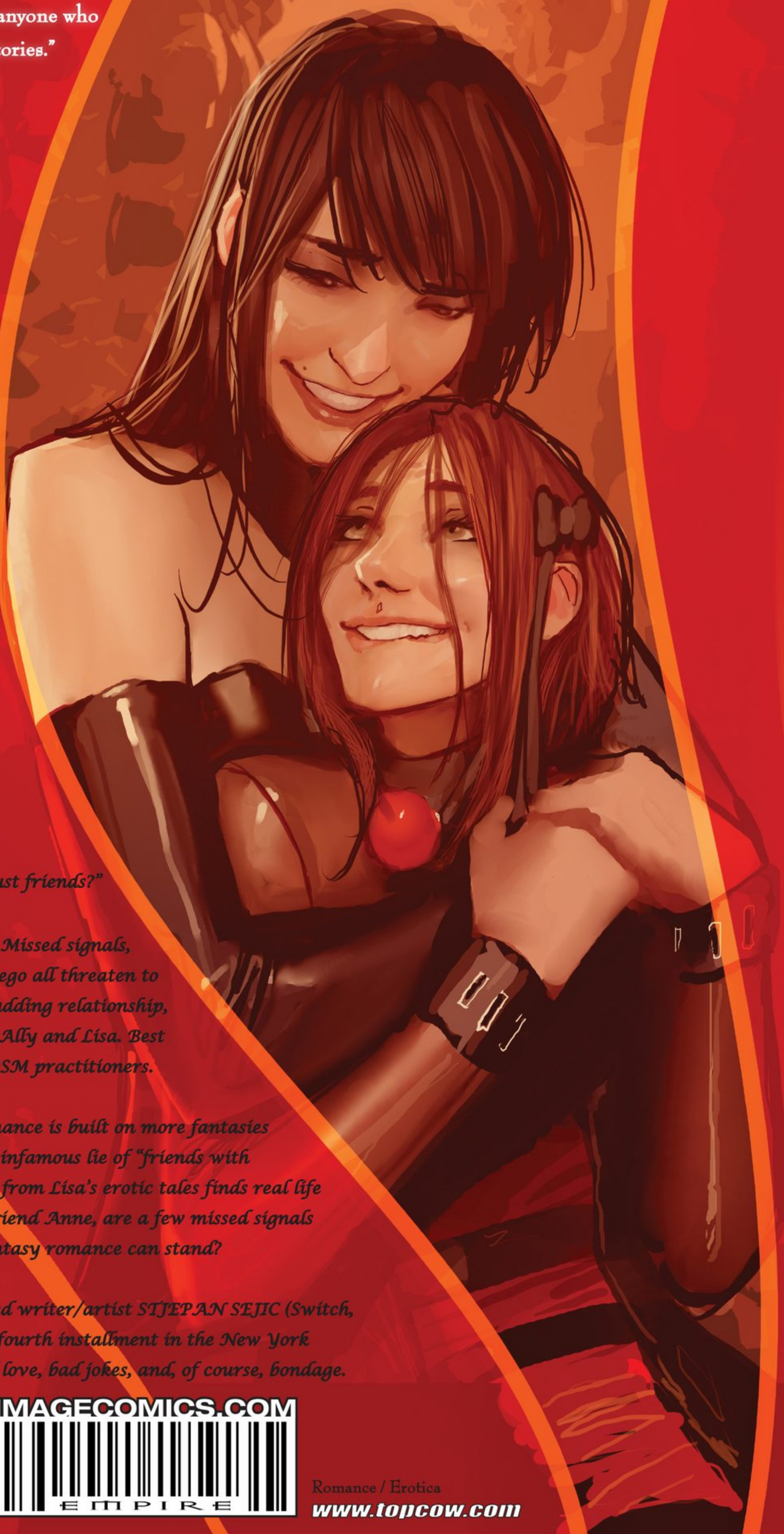
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